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TRAVELS IN TOWN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LORDS AND COMMONS," "THE GREAT METROPOLIS,"

&c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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1839.

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PREFACE.

THE title of this work may at first sight seem inappropriate. It has been chosen because the volumes contain the results of a very extensive intercourse on the part of the Author, with the inhabitants of this modern Babylon, and of an intimate acquaintance with many of its most interesting institutions. The book is intended as a companion to "The Great Metropolis" and "Sketches in London," and if it only meet with as great success as these two works have done, the Author will have abundant reason to be satisfied with its reception by the public.

LONDON, *November*, 1838.

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TRAVELS IN TOWN.

CHAPTER I.

THE STREETS.

Leading entrances to London—Streets near St. Katherine's Docks—Cheapside—Streets in the vicinity of the Elephant and Castle—Piccadilly—Oxford Street—Gower Street—Mile-end Road—Whitechapel—The People in the streets—Difference in the appearance of different streets—Interesting associations connected with particular streets—The streets as they appear by day, and as they appear by night—General remarks.

THERE is nothing that so forcibly strikes a stranger, on entering London, as the state of its leading streets. When I use the term street, I shall not, I am sure, be understood as meaning the pavement or causeway of our principle thoroughfares. I refer, if the expression be a

proper one, to their animated condition, as illustrative of the character, habits, and pursuits of the inhabitants of our compact metropolitan world; for London must be regarded as a little world of itself.

There may be said to be, just now, seven great openings into London, through which the vast majority of visitors make their entrance into it. The first is through Gracechurch Street or King William Street, into the city. Through one or other of these streets, most of those who come by sea to London, whether from some part of the United Kingdom, or from some more distant part of the world, enter this all-absorbing place.

Another road is that which, passing the Elephant and Castle, extends itself to the High Street of the Borough, and thence along London Bridge to Gracechurch Street. A third, is that which comes past Hyde Park Corner, and loses itself in Piccadilly. These roads connect the metropolis with various parts of the South of England.

A fourth great opening into London, is through

Oxford Street, the longest, and perhaps the finest street, all things considered, in the world. This is the inlet to the metropolis from the Western parts of England, as may be inferred from the fact, that on the passengers arriving at Paddington, from the Great Western Railway, they, with very few exceptions, proceed to Oxford Street, and then are swallowed up in this mighty metropolis.

The fifth great entrance into London, is at Euston Square, the terminus of the London and Birmingham Railway. This is one which is of recent origin. Twelve months have not elapsed since this opening was made, and yet it has already become one through which immense numbers of people daily thrust themselves into the heart of this metropolis.

The sixth is through the great North Road, which may be said to terminate at the Angel Inn, Islington; for from that place large and commodious thoroughfares branch off in every direction; so that not only the stranger, but even the person who has been many years resident in London, feels himself in some measure

lost when in that particular spot. To be sure, the number of persons entering London from the great North Road has of late very considerably diminished, owing to the partial opening of the London and Birmingham Railway; and when the work has been completed, and the trains shall run all the way, the number of persons who will come to the metropolis through Islington will be still further reduced.* There is no doubt, however, that the great North Road must continue for many years to be one of the principal entrances into London, as it leads directly to various towns of considerable population and importance.

The seventh, and last, of the principal openings into the metropolis, is by Mile-end Road. This is the thoroughfare through which nearly all persons, coming from the East of England, make their entrance into London, and as none of the railways have yet interfered with it, it continues to pour a constant stream of human beings into the all-absorbing vortex of this vast place.

* Since this was written, the railroad has been opened all the way.

Reverting to the opening into the metropolis, first mentioned, as that through which almost every person who travels by sea, is obliged to pass; it is one which is perhaps more calculated to make an impression on the mind of the visitor than any of the other six. On the river after he has reached Blackwall, all is bustle and confusion. The vessels which are stationary, coupled with those which are sailing to or from a part of the river nearer the heart of the great city, are objects of intense interest to him. His attention is diverted from them by the innumerable shoals of skiffs and other boats which are plying all around him. Nothing could so much rivet the attention, and excite the astonishment of the stranger, on his first voyage up the river, than the innumerable boats and vessels of every kind, which meet his eye in all directions. He is amazed at the rapidity with which some of the lighter craft skim along the water, and wonders that, with their number, and the celerity with which they are propelled, accidents so rarely occur. All is animation, and bustle, and business; the river

is a place of extensive traffic; on a fine day it has all the appearance of a fair.

But this is a digression. My present subject is the streets, not the river. If the stranger land at St. Katherine's Docks, his first impressions of London, after he has got into the nearest streets, must be exceedingly unfavourable. The houses are high, and dark, and dingy; the streets are narrow, and it is a hundred to one if they be not wet and dirty; for a clean and dry street in the immediate neighbourhood of St. Katherine's Docks, is indeed a rare circumstance. There are no signs of commerce, except it be here and there a solitary cart loaded with merchandise, lazily wending its way towards the city. The streets are nearly deserted, and the stranger not only wonders that people could be induced to live there, but he begins to be incredulous as to all he has heard of the bustle, and business, and fine appearance of the streets of London.

The route, after landing at these Docks, will most probably be through the Minories, where he will see a pleasant, open, respectable-looking

street; but still there is nothing in it which at all approaches his ideas of London. He enters Aldgate, and proceeds in the direction of Cornhill, and then he begins to think with himself, that this is the metropolis of which he has heard so much. If he land in the vicinity of London Bridge, he wends his way, under the direction of some cabman or porter, until he reaches Gracechurch Street, or King William Street, and then, all at once, a new scene bursts on his gaze. There he is confounded by the signs of life, and activity, and business which meet his eye, and which also appeal to his ear.

At whatever part the visitor may have landed, he is sure, if his place of destination be in the centre of the metropolis, to pass through Cheapside. And then what a scene opens to his view! Not more astonished could he feel, had he been suddenly transported into another planet. Every thing is new and surprising to him. He is overpowered with the sight. The pavement on either side is crowded with pedestrians, not walking leisurely, but *hurrying* onwards on their respective errands, and to their respective

destinations. On the pavement on the right hand, you see one great and continuous stream of human beings, rushing, if I may use the expression, in a westward direction; another stream of men and women is running in an eastward course. On the pavement on the other side, you also see two similar streams — perhaps, torrents would be a more expressive word—of human beings, running in an opposite direction, and yet the one stream never interfering or coming in collision with the other. The stranger cannot fail to be much struck at the entire absorption of every one he sees, with his own matters.

The teeming population on the pavement all pass each other with as much indifference as if they had not eyes in their heads, or were so many inanimate objects moved by machinery. They seem as if they did not belong to the same species, or as if it were a crime to take cognisance, in any way, of each other, as they pass along. The middle of the street again is so crowded with vehicles of every description, that Cheapside often appears one

vast coach-stand. So closely are the vehicles here sometimes pressed together, that you have to walk a considerable distance before you can cross to the opposite side.

In an article on the vehicles of London, which I wrote some time ago for a popular periodical, I mentioned what every one acquainted with the metropolis knows to be a fact, that so great is the number of vehicles sometimes to be seen at one time in Cheapside, that could a person scramble along horses' backs as well as over the tops of coaches, cabs, carts, omnibuses, &c., he might almost pass from one end of that street to the other, though more than a third of a mile in length, without once putting his foot on the ground. What the astonishment of the stranger must be when he sees so great a number of vehicles of every class, and almost all containing persons proceeding from one part of London to the other,—will be better imagined than it were possible for me to describe it. Once through Cheapside, it is unnecessary to follow the stranger further. Nothing he sees in the city will strike him as

wonderful, after he has passed along that crowded and ever-active thoroughfare.

The entrance to London in the Elephant and Castle direction, is one which has its objects of interest to the stranger, though such interest is not so great as that which attaches to the entrance just referred to. The "huge town" comes more gradually on him. He is prepared for a place of great population, and great traffic by the crowded state of the suburbs, and the immense number of vehicles of every description which are flying about him in all directions. He reaches the Elephant and Castle, and is confounded by the number of stage-coaches, all full of passengers, which are either resting for a moment to put down or take up customers, or are being driven with an alarming rapidity along all the great roads which branch off from that particular point. He is astonished that, where there is so much furious driving in thoroughfares so densely crowded as are all the leading streets in that immediate neighbourhood, there should be so few accidents, either through vehicles coming in collision, or through

pedestrians being run over. When once past the Elephant and Castle, on his way to the Borough, the visitor may be said to have entered London. The High Street of Southwark has much of the bustle and animation and trade of the leading thoroughfares on this side of the water. He is surprised at what he sees,—at the splendour of many of the shops, and the crowded and animated appearance of the streets; but the surprise comes on too gradually to be, as in the case of a sudden entrance into Gracechurch Street, or King William Street, of an overpowering kind.

But by far the most striking and imposing entrance into the metropolis, is that by Hyde Park Corner, and along Piccadilly. The crowded state of the road, both with vehicles and pedestrians, as he reaches this end of Knightsbridge; the handsome houses on the right-hand, and the park on the left, are well adapted to prepare him for the great vortex into which he is about to plunge himself.

Proceeding a little further, he finds this wide and open entrance into London much more

thickly studded with vehicles of every description, and more crowded with pedestrians. He reaches Hyde Park Corner, and his eye is arrested, first, by the great extent of the Park, and then by the splendour of the entrance into it. He turns to the right, and sees another extensive and beautiful park, also boasting a magnificent entrance. His attention is withdrawn from these by Apsley House, the town residence of the Duke of Wellington, which, it is worthy of observation, is the very first house on the left hand of Hyde Park Corner, and, properly speaking, the first house on entering London from the south of England. Splendid mansions on the left now challenge the visitor's attention for a considerable distance, while on the right he looks through the Green Park for about a third of a mile, until his eye is arrested by Buckingham Palace, the residence of our popular maiden Queen. Is it not a magnificent structure? Is not the Green Park a beautiful place?

He proceeds on his journey through Piccadilly, utterly lost in astonishment at the scene of

activity which presents itself to him. The pavements are bending under the crowds of pedestrians, for the most part elegantly attired, who are hastening to their several places of destination; while the middle of the street appears one vast assemblage of vehicles driven at a rapid rate. He is struck with the great number of noblemen's and gentlemen's equipages which here mingle with the common hackney coaches, omnibuses, &c., and forms at once in his own mind some conception, though but a faint one, of the luxury as well as of the business and bustle of this metropolitan locality. Stage-coaches and omnibuses whirl past him in such rapid succession, and all so heavily laden with passengers, that he cannot help fancying that London is in the act of emptying itself of its population. He cannot conceive how such crowds of people could continue for any length of time to hurry out of town without draining it of its inhabitants, and leaving it a comparatively desolate place. The farther he proceeds, the more is he convinced of the untenableness of his theory; for as he reaches

the White Horse Cellar, which is about half way down Piccadilly, he finds to his unspeakable surprise, that the streets instead of being thinner, are more and more crowded. He feels as if he were in a new world. He cannot comprehend how business can be carried on, or how people can exist with any comfort to themselves, in a place where the pavements are so thronged with people—the streets with horses, carriages, gigs, cabs, omnibuses, and every description of vehicle—and where there is an everlasting deafening din, and a confusion which, as he thinks, could not be surpassed. In whatever direction he afterwards proceeds, provided he keep by the leading thoroughfares, he finds so much of the same noise and bustle and confusion, that he gradually begins to cease wondering at it.

The entrance to the metropolis from the West end of Oxford Street, is well calculated to give the visitor a favourable impression of the place. The moment he enters it, he is struck with its fine open appearance; but especially with its great extent; for it is about a mile

and a half in length, in a straight line; being, as already remarked, longer than any street in any other city in the world. He is amazed, if not overwhelmed at the scene before him; for the whole of this space, extensive as it is, appears as if it were one mass of life and animation. The pavements, as in all the other principal thoroughfares in London, are so densely crowded with pedestrians, that you wonder how they manage to move with such alacrity. The middle of the street, as in Piccadilly, exhibits an incredible number of vehicles of all descriptions—from the most splendid carriages of the aristocracy, down to the coster's donkey and cart. Perhaps, with the single exception of Cheapside, there is not a street in London through which so many vehicles pass: of omnibuses alone, no fewer than 1200* run along it every day. When the stranger

* I need hardly say that I do not mean, that there are so many separate vehicles; for that is a greater number than there is in London. I only mean, that including the return of the same omnibuses, and the third and fourth journeys they often make in the same day, 1200 journeys are accomplished in the course of twelve hours.

passes Regent Circus, his attention is withdrawn in part from the crowd of pedestrians and vehicles, to the splendid shops which present themselves on either side, but especially on the north side of the street.

Altogether different is the first impression which a stranger has of London, when he enters it at Euston Square, the termination, as before mentioned, of the London and Birmingham railway. If he proceed through the squares in a south-east direction, he is struck with the aspect of elegance and comfort which they present; but there are no indications of his being in the first commercial town in the world. If he take the more direct road, which is along Gower Street, to the centre of London, he finds himself for at least a mile of his journey, to be passing through a street which scarcely exhibits any signs of its being an inhabited place. Here and there you see a solitary pedestrian, or perchance a one-horse chaise. The stranger, in passing along this street, feels an emotion of melancholy come over him caused by its dulness and unbroken monotony; and fancying it, per-

haps, to be a fair specimen of London, he wonders how people can betray so entire a disregard of the truth as to represent the metropolis as a place of business and bustle, and noise and din. His notions of London are rectified when he reaches High Holborn. If he see few or no traces of splendour there, both his ears and his eyes admonish him of the traffic and animation of the more central streets of the metropolis.

The entrance by the great North Road, has nothing of peculiar interest until you reach the Angel Inn. Then the stranger begins to fancy, from the stir and bustle, and the number of omnibuses and persons moving in every direction, that he has got into the great Babel. Still he has no definite notions about the place. He sees but few shops, and these few are only of a very inferior kind. If he look down the City Road, the houses all appear clean and comfortable, with small gardens before the doors of the majority of them. If he cast his eye in the Pentonville direction, the aspect of things is pretty much the same. If he look forward, or towards the south, he sees only small houses,

not much calculated to inspire him with any very exalted ideas of London. Whatever direction he takes from this particular place, he finds that he must proceed at least a mile before he can reach a spot which will afford him a fair specimen of what the leading streets of the metropolis are.

The other great entrance into London which remains to be adverted to, is that at the East End, along the Mile-End road. The number of persons who daily enter this mighty metropolis at this point, is very great, though I am not able to furnish any idea of what the actual number is. The buildings in this direction extend so far, that the stranger fancies he must be at the farther end of the town, before he can well be said to haye entered the place. He has travelled at least two miles and a half, during which time, he has concluded that he was in the very heart of London, before he has reached the eastern extremity of the city. In Mile-End Road he has seen vehicles without number, with swarms of human beings : he has seen stands on the outside of the pavement, as well as shops in

their usual places, for the sale of every conceivable article which a person could be supposed likely to wish to purchase. He concludes that this must be a fair specimen of the general aspect of the metropolis. He enters Whitechapel, and proceeds along it in the usual way, and is surprised at the altered appearance, as compared with that of Mile-End Road, which presents itself to his view. He sees nothing on the south side but sheep and other animals, slaughtered for the good of man. Inwardly, he inquires, can we be a community of fleshers? Of this he is certain, that Buonaparte would have been nearer the mark, had he characterized us a nation of butchers, instead of a nation of shopkeepers. To be sure, the error is but of a very transitory duration, for he has only reached Aldgate when he discovers his mistake. There he has the first indication, though an imperfect one, of what he may expect our principal metropolitan thoroughfares to be.

Such are the leading entrances into London, and the aspect of the streets or roads in which they

are situated. The longer the stranger remains in town, the less striking, of course, do the streets appear to him. The gloss of novelty, as a necessary consequence, gradually wears off; but, after all, there is always something in the appearance of our principal metropolitan streets to interest and amuse. The bustle and activity, at all times observable in them, is one feature, which cannot fail to keep up the attention of the passer-by. Then there is the display of human character which is always to be witnessed in the streets. You not only see around you every variety of human character, but you often see eccentricities of character displayed to the greatest advantage. You see the fop as vain of his figure, or, more properly speaking, of himself, as a peacock is of its gaudy plumes of feathers. By way of contrast to him, you see men literally stooping from their bashfulness or humility. There is the perfect dandy; yonder is a man who cares nothing about the decoration of his person. That man on your right is a habitual swindler, and lives by plundering his fellow men; the person on his left would rather

die of hunger than defraud any individual under heaven, of even a farthing's-worth of property. That person, who walks at so quick a pace, is an active man of business, and has now something which bears on the interests of the shop on his mind; the individual who is nearest to him, and who is pacing the pavement so leisurely, has nothing to do, or rather will do nothing except live in idleness at the expense of the public or his friends. In fine, you not only see every variety of human character, as you perambulate the streets of London; but you often see peculiarities of character exhibited to the greatest advantage; for all being here equally buried in the general mass, individuals have fewer conventional restraints laid upon them.

Not more marked is the difference in the appearance of the streets themselves, in one part of London, as compared with the streets in another, than is the difference in the feelings, habits, and manners of the persons who walk along them. In Cheapside, or the other leading thoroughfares in the city, the individuals you find perambulating those thoroughfares are

altogether different in every thing but form and stature and the attributes which are common to human nature, from those you meet in Regent Street. In Cheapside every one seems bent on some errand of the deepest importance; or, on some matter of business which will admit of no delay. Time is precious to him; you see the man of trade or commerce visibly imprinted on his face. He has, most probably, a good coat on his back, but there is nothing of the dandy about him. His wardrobe exhibits no traces of having "come through the hands" of some of the fashionable "decorators" of the West End; in his case, you cannot say with truth, that the tailor makes the man. There is nothing stiff or artificial about him; he has not time, far less the disposition, to play the fine gentleman. But very few of Truefit's customers find their way to the city. To see a moustached personage in that locality would excite our special wonder. Were we to meet with such a rarity, one could scarcely help "taking a note of it," with the view of putting it in print. A walking-cane is also an article

very seldom to be witnessed in the hands of a city pedestrian.

Behold the contrast in Regent Street! The patronizers of that fine, open, beautiful street are evidently there, for the purpose of seeing or being seen. You perceive, by their physiognomies and manner, that they have nothing to do; and, in this very interesting way of spending their time, the one keeps the other in countenance. See what dandies they are! The obligations of the gentlemen to their tailors, and of the ladies to their dress-makers and milliners, are too manifest not to be at once observed. Witness their stiff and artificial gait, and observe how slow and stately are their movements. What their objects are in being there, beyond that of wishing to "show off," nobody can divine; it is doubtful whether they could tell themselves. Of moustaches we have here a most abundant harvest; and, as for walking-canes, and the other usual appurtenances of sprigs of fashion, their name is legion: they meet your eye everywhere. The display of jewellery about their persons is all that could

be wished; it would make any Jew's eye glisten, as the homely phrase has it, to witness the number and variety of their "ornaments of gold." The citizens laugh in their sleeves at the fashionables of the West End, and the latter hold the cits in as great contempt as if they belonged to an inferior order of creation.

Those who know anything of the people of London, as well as of London itself, must have been often struck, in passing along its streets, with the vast difference there frequently is between the appearance of a person's circumstances and the reality. You meet with men who are dressed in the extreme of fashion, and whom you would suppose, judging from their manner as well as their apparel, to be persons of splendid fortune, who have not a farthing in the world, and who are often at a loss to know where or how they are to procure their next meal, provided they get one at all. In other cases, especially in the city, you occasionally meet with persons in the streets, whom you would fancy, from their wardrobe and general appearance, could not command a sovereign,

who are worth their thousands and tens of thousands. Appearances are proverbially deceptive. I know of no instance in which the adage applies with so much propriety and force as in that of many of the persons you encounter in the streets of London.

London contains about 8,500 streets, lanes, &c. Among such an immense number, there must necessarily be a great variety in their appearance. Some, as has been already more than once stated, are all life and animation, and bustle; while others are usually so desolate in their aspect, that it is refreshing to see some five or six individuals in them at a time. There are several streets in the metropolis which exhibit so few appearances of life, that you would have difficulty in persuading a stranger that the houses were inhabited. Some streets are open and airy; others are so close and confined, that you wonder how human beings can breathe their atmosphere and yet survive. Some streets are exceedingly beautiful; others are ugly beyond the possibility of description. There are some you could wish

never to quit; there are others you could wish never to enter.

In passing along the streets of the metropolis, there are many interesting circumstances connected with particular places which, were they generally known, would afford much gratification to the stranger, apart from the mere architectural appearance of those streets. For example, with how much greater interest would the visitor look at Whitehall, were the particular house pointed out to him, at the front of which Charles the First was executed? Leicester Square, too, would have additional attractions to any man who was informed of the house, in that square, in which Sir Isaac Newton lived. Even Grub Street, in Cripplegate, formerly proverbial for the number of poor authors who vegetated in its garrets, would be a street of special interest to every intellectual man, were it generally known, which it is not, that in one of the houses in that street, Milton spent several years of the latter part of his life.

The pedestrian, who has his eyes about him, as he passes along the streets of London, will

observe many things, unconnected with the mere streets themselves, or the objects he sees in the shops, which will possess considerable interest to him. For instance, he will find, from a notification to that effect above the door of a tobacconist's shop in Newgate Street, that the business now carrying on in that shop, was established in the year 1686, two years prior to the Revolution; which business has been regularly carried on in the same premises since. This is a curious fact, and cannot fail to give rise to a train of interesting reflections. There is another business, that of a pawnbroker in Brydges Street, Strand, which has been carried on unremittingly since the year 1704. But the oldest established business in London with which I am acquainted, is that of a chemist, in King Street, Cheapside. It commenced in 1616. What changes have taken place in London, the country, and the world since that time!

The expedition with which erections are made, and removed in front of the houses in the leading streets of London, at a time of some great public spectacle, is truly astonishing. A few

days, for instance, before the coronation of Her Majesty, in June last, wooden and other erections of the most substantial kind, started up in front of hundreds of houses along the line of procession, with a rapidity which, to strangers, must have appeared almost magical. But still more expeditiously did they vanish: in two or three days after the coronation there was not a trace of them to be seen. The streets had as entirely resumed their wonted appearance as if nothing had happened.

The contrast between the streets of the metropolis, as they appear in the day and at night, must have struck everybody. In the day-time, the pavements teem with human beings, and the causeway with horses; all is bustle and activity, while your ears are assailed with the everlasting rattling of vehicles. At night, the pavements are deserted, and the silence which reigns around you, is only broken, at long intervals, by the noise caused by the wheels of some solitary coach or cab. But more striking still, because more sudden, is the change which takes place in the appearance of the

streets when, what the newspapers call a "tremendous shower" of rain suddenly takes place. The rapidity with which the streets are then thinned of their pedestrian population, is almost incredible. The most densely crowded thoroughfares present in a few moments the appearance of a desert. The marvel is, where the tens of thousands you saw but a moment or two previously, could so promptly have found a place of refuge from the pelting rain.

Walking in the streets of London is almost at all times disagreeable. There is rarely any alternative between dust and mud. You are either in danger of being suffocated with the former, or being covered with the latter. The suddenness of the transition from being immersed in clouds of dust, to being spattered from top to toe with mud, is remarkable; it is what no person living in a provincial town, can have any conception of. When you come out from breakfast in the morning, you cannot cross any of the leading thoroughfares, unless where some knight of the broom has made a pathway for you, without being up to the ankles

in mud; in the afternoon the dust is flying in every direction, in such quantities, that you are afraid of being choked by it.

The streets of London afford a fine specimen of a miniature republic. All are there on a footing of perfect equality. You cannot distinguish the haughty aristocrat from the humble mechanic, unless, indeed, you perceive a difference in the cut or quality of their respective coats. Both pass on equally unheeded by the crowds around them. The nobleman is unknown, and would be unnoticed even were his person identified. No one would pause to pay him any marks of respect. How different from what he is accustomed to witness where known in the provinces! There everybody takes off his hat to him, and otherwise expresses his respect; here he is utterly lost amidst the crowds which surround him.

CHAPTER II.

THE PARK.

Its history—Purposes to which it was formerly applied—Its beautiful appearance—Is the resort of the beauty and fashion of the Metropolis—A question asked and answered—The place it occupies in fashionable volumes—Intrigues in the Park—Love sometimes inspired in the Park—An instance given—The Park during a sudden shower—Contrast in its appearance at different times—Aristocratic notions about the Park.

HYDE PARK, or *the* Park as it is generally called, to indicate its superior celebrity as compared with any of the other parks in London, is a place of which every one has heard, and which every one who visits the metropolis makes a point of seeing. And yet, notwithstanding the attractiveness of this locality, there are few persons who have any knowledge

of its history. In my researches into scarce works of an antiquated date, with the view of acquiring information respecting the former history of particular parts of the metropolis, I have often had to complain of having laboured in vain; but in no instance have I experienced so much difficulty in my endeavours to ascertain the history of any institution, building, or locality, as I have done in my inquiries into the circumstances under which Hyde Park came to be what it now is.

The earliest authentic particulars I have been able to obtain regarding this interesting locality, represent it as having been seized among the crown lands soon after the death of Charles I. It was one of the few royal demesnes which were excepted from sale by a legislative ordinance issued in 1649. In three years afterwards, it was determined on by the government of that period, that Hyde Park, with some other lands belonging to the crown, should be sold for ready money. To what special purpose the purchase money was to be applied, I have not been able to learn. Immediately

prior to the sale, which took place in 1652, a survey of the Park was made, and the admeasurement was given at 620 acres. The estimated annual value of the mere land was £894 13s. 6d., which, speaking in round numbers, may have been equal to £3000 of our money. The timber growing in the Park was valued at £4779 19s. 6d., and the deer at £300. The Park was divided into lots, and was sold to various persons. The entire amount of the purchase money received for it, including the timber and the deer, was £17,068 6s. 8d. The crown lands having been resumed by the king immediately after the Restoration, Hyde Park was again replenished with deer, and was enclosed by a brick wall. The Park was at this period much more extensive than it now is. It then extended on the east to Park Lane, and on the west included the space now called Kensington Gardens. Its present extent is nearly 400 acres.

Hyde Park, it would appear, was originally appropriated to all sorts of diversions on the part of the inhabitants of London. A writer

who flourished about the middle of the seventeenth century, speaking of Hyde Park, as it appeared on the 1st of May, 1654, says, "This day was more observed by people going a Maying,* than for divers years past. Great resort to Hyde Park; many hundreds of note, coaches, and gallants in attire, but most shameful powdered hair men, and painted spotted women. Some men played with a silver ball, and some took other recreation, but not his Highness the Lord Protector, nor any of the Lords of the council." It would appear from this, that Cromwell and his lords of council had been in the practice of frequenting Hyde Park for the purposes of relaxation from the cares of government, if not of diversion. But we are not left to mere inference on the subject; for it is a well known matter of historical fact, that the Protector, or Usurper,—whichever the reader according to the complexion of his politics or his particular views of the history of that period, is pleased to call him; it is, I say, a

* That is, to celebrate the 1st of May, a custom now only observed by our metropolitan chimney-sweeps.

well known historical fact, that about this time Cromwell met with an accident in Hyde Park, which was likely to have been attended with fatal results. While one day taking an airing in the Park, he was suddenly seized with a desire to enact the character of Jehu, and accordingly mounted the dickey, and took into his hands the reins which guided the six horses which drew his chariot. He had not long played the part of charioteer, before he discovered that it was somewhat more difficult to govern his six horses, than it was to keep in subjection the twelve or fourteen millions of human beings who acknowledged his sway and submitted to his pleasure. The horses became unmanageable, and the result was, the overturning of the carriage. In Cromwell's fall, one of the loaded pistols which he always carried in his pockets went off, and he miraculously escaped receiving its contents.

Among the diversions which were practised in Hyde Park about the middle of the seventeenth century, that of hunting matches seems to have been very common. "The Moderate

Intelligencer," a daily paper of that period, says under the date of May 3, 1654, that a few days before, there "had been a great hunting match between fifty Cornish gentlemen on the one side, and fifty on the other." The same journal adds, that the Lord Protector, and several of his privy council were present on the occasion.

Five years subsequent to this, a Frenchman, writing to a friend in Paris, gives a description of Hyde Park, which throws some further light on the uses to which it was then applied. "I did," says the Frenchman, "frequently accompany my Lord N—— into a field near the town, which they call Hyde Park; the place not unpleasant,—and which they use as our course, but with nothing of that order, equipage and splendour,—being such an assemblage of wretched jades and hackney coaches, as, next to a regiment of carmen, there is nothing approaching the resemblance. This Park was, it seems, used by the late king and nobility for the freshness of the air, and the goodly prospect; but it is that which now besides all

other exercises, they pay for here in England, though it be free for all the world besides; every coach and horse which enters bringing his mouthful, and permission of the publican who has purchased it; for which the entrance is guarded with porters and long staves." The language of this French writer is somewhat elliptical, but it may be fairly gathered from it, that Hyde Park was at that time chiefly the resort of the lower classes, and that some small sum was exacted from every person who entered it.

The next information of any importance which I have been able to procure respecting Hyde Park, is contained in a little work entitled "The Circus; or British Olympics, being a Satire on the Ring at Hyde Park." From this work, which was published in 1709, it would appear that the Park was at that time the resort of all the fashionable part of the metropolitan population, and that it was no uncommon thing to see one thousand carriages in it in the course of one afternoon.

From 1709 up to the present time, the Park

has continued to be the great resort of the fashionable world. It is certainly a charming place. It is in a fine, open, airy situation and what with the trees in Kensington Gardens, and the handsome houses on the east, and north, and south, presents a remarkably interesting and pleasant view. The entrance to it from the west-end of Piccadilly is imposing and magnificent in the extreme. Its attractions, indeed, altogether are so great, that no other place in the vicinity of London can bear a moment's comparison with it. I question if there be many such places in the world.

If any one would form a correct conception of the luxury and grandeur of fashionable life in the metropolis, he must visit the Park on a fine afternoon, in what is called the London season. That season usually commences immediately after the Easter holidays, and terminates in July. It is at its height in May and June. Let, then, the man who is desirous of knowing something of the splendour of aristocratic life in this mighty place, visit Hyde Park about five o'clock on a fine afternoon, in either

of those months, and he may be assured that however high his expectations on the subject were, they will be far exceeded. He will be dazzled with the magnificence which surrounds him. He will be overpowered with the brilliancy of the scene. He will feel as if he had been suddenly translated into a new world; or as if his vision was more than realizing all that he had ever read, in the pages of romance, of eastern splendour. As far as his eye can reach along the carriage-road, he sees nothing but the most magnificent equipages: their number, not less than their grandeur, fills him with amazement. His admiration is divided between the carriages and those who are in them. Here he sees the beauty and fashion of the metropolis to far greater advantage than he could in any other place,—always of course excepting Almack's, and some of the great routs which are given by the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Northumberland, the Duke of Buccleuch, or some of the other leaders in the aristocratic world. I speak within bounds when I say, that if you take up your station in the middle of the Park, you may,

on occasions, see at one time four or five hundred carriages, phaetons, cabriolets, &c., to say nothing of single horses, with their noble or honourable riders on their backs; all whirling and galloping about with a velocity that gives to the whole scene much of a fairy aspect.

And is there nothing but happiness in all this? The man who looks not below the surface of things would come to the conclusion, that if there be true felicity in the world, that felicity must be enjoyed by those who revel in the splendour he sees around him. There could not be a greater error. Gaiety and grandeur are not synonymous with happiness. The greatest luxury and the utmost magnificence will often be found associated with the deepest misery. The most gorgeously attired, and highest titled lady among the vast throng, may be actually much more unhappy than the poorest mendicant who crawls from door to door, and whose wardrobe is a mass of rags. If there be places in the earth in which the appearance and the reality are the antipodes of each other, it is in those places which are the resort of the fashionable

world. You are struck with the singular beauty of many a lady-face you see around you: there may be no indication of a mind ill at ease in that beautiful face; there may, on the contrary, be an expression of cheerfulness, and yet that expression may be assumed. The bosom of its fascinating possessor may be the seat of inexpressible wretchedness. If the higher classes have sources of enjoyment peculiar to themselves, they have also causes of misery which are unknown to those in the lowlier walks of life. Envy at the real or imagined better fortune of their acquaintances—the actual or fancied slight—the constant rivalry to outshine each other, and the consequent effects of this foolish passion—the embarrassment in pecuniary matters which necessarily results from those extravagant habits which are generated by a vain desire for display, and the amours, intrigues and scandal, which are so characteristic of the aristocratic world, all conspire to produce prolific misery among those whose destiny it is to live, and move, and have their being in that narrow and exclusive world.

The Park, as a matter of course, figures largely in all fashionable novels. To write indeed a fashionable novel, without the name of the Park frequently occurring in it, would be held to augur the unfitness of the author for the task he had undertaken. It would at once be set down as a conclusive proof, that the author knew nothing of aristocratic life, and consequently could not be qualified for producing a fashionable fiction. The writer who introduces the Park with sufficient frequency into his work, is at once set down as one who has mixed largely in aristocratic circles, and is well fitted for describing fashionable life.

That the Park should be frequently referred to, and be often made the scene of incidents in the higher circles, is not surprising, when it is remembered how often romantic incidents do actually occur in that interesting, and, in the estimation of the aristocratic world, classical locality. Many clandestine assignations have taken place there. Many are the instances in which the language of love has been spoken by signs in the Park, when circumstances prevented

the parties giving utterance to their sentiments by means of the human voice. Lovers in the higher ranks of life are there, in the habit of interchanging expressive glances with each other when they are debarred from private interviews together. Innumerable are the intrigues which are fostered and "advanced a stage" in the Park, in cases where the lady is, as they suppose, so narrowly watched by her friends, as not even to have an opportunity of bestowing a glance on her lover. The colour of a lady's ribbons in her bonnet, the circumstance of her hand encased in a white or other complexioned glove, resting on the window of the carriage, are matters which, though unintelligible to the multitude and even to friends, are found to prove an exceedingly expressive language where the parties, either through conversation or correspondence, have previously had an opportunity of understanding each other.

It were well if the Park were not the means of encouraging anything but pure, even though in many cases clandestine, love. Unhappily it is far otherwise. Innumerable are the guilty

amours which have there been fed and fostered. Looks and signs have been interchanged between the parties, which, though perfectly unmeaning to, even if observed by, others, have been most expressive in so far as they themselves were concerned. I could refer to instances of this kind which have eventually come before the public, but no good end could be subserved by a reference to former crimes long since forgotten.

Young ladies would require to be very careful how they look and how they act in the Park. The want of this circumspection on the part of ladies, and especially of marriageable ladies with large fortunes, has in repeated cases been attended with very inconvenient results, both to the love-struck swains themselves, and to those ladies whose attractions of face or fortune have inspired the tender passion. A very striking instance of this occurred within the last few months. A week or two before the coronation of our youthful Sovereign, one of the richest heiresses, if not the richest heiress either in England, or in Europe, chanced

to bestow a look on a stranger who was at the time playing the part of a pedestrian in the Park. Very likely the lady slightly smiled on the occasion; for one has no idea of an amiable and accomplished young lady looking on any one, far less a handsome young man, without deigning to smile. At all events the love-struck swain laid the flattering unction to his soul, that the lady did favour him with an *Angel*-ic smile; a position in the tenability of which he felt additionally confirmed when he saw her drop her glove. There could be no doubt—so at least he thought—that this must all be the result of a deep-rooted affection for him, and therefore in the spirit of true gallantry, he not only felt bound to pick up her glove, but to lay siege to her hand, as he fancied her heart was already quite secure. He accordingly became desperately enamoured of the young lady's self—or fortune, and followed her in the character of a willing slave, until, at a favourite watering-place, he allowed his love to get the better of his discretion, and frightened the object of his idolatry from her propriety;

making himself not only the subject of fashionable conversation of a very unpleasant kind, but of very ugly newspaper paragraphs.

Perhaps a more ludicrous scene is not to be witnessed, than that which the Park exhibits when a heavy shower of rain overtakes the pedestrians at the season of the year and the hour of the day at which it is most largely attended. And I may here observe, that on a fine Sunday afternoon, the attendance of pedestrians must often be from 20,000 to 30,000. These chiefly consist of dashing young dress-makers, clerks, shopmen, &c., most of whom are attired, as the police reporters have it, "in the extreme of fashion."

Fancy then the terror caused among such persons, when St. Swithin takes it into his head to pay an abrupt and unexpected visit to the Park. Off they set as simultaneously for the nearest houses, in the hope of there finding shelter, as if fire instead of water were descending from the clouds. They look as affrighted as if, instead of fleeing to save their silks and satins, their Saxony cloth, and other fineries,

they were fleeing for their lives. According to the couplet—

> "Those now run who never ran before,
> And those who once did run, now run the more."

And truly laughable is it to witness the way in which some of them do run. No description can convey any idea of the variety and awkwardness of the positions assumed by the biped racers. Prim misses and stiff artificial dandies of our own sex, are compelled to throw aside for the time all their airs and affectation, and to take to their heels with all the expedition they can achieve. Many in the precipitancy of their retreat have great difficulty in retaining their equilibrium; others lose it altogether; thus not only realizing the old proverb of "most haste least speed," but also converting bad into worse. When showers of rain do take people in the Park by surprise, they are usually that class of showers which the penny-a-liners denominate "tremendous." And frightful is the destruction of finery which is the necessary result. Many of the articles of ladies' apparel never afterwards recover from the visitation; they cannot be

worn again. The same may be said of the more fanciful portions of the dress of dandies belonging to the masculine gender. No wonder that with such probable calamities before their eyes—to say nothing of their abstract unpleasantness apart from all future consequences—there should be a desperate rush in the direction of the fancied places of shelter. And wonderful is the alacrity with which the pedestrian patronizers of the Park, on such occasions, disappear from your sight. They vanish almost instantaneously. A few seconds ago, you saw from twenty to thirty thousand, distributed over a space of three-quarters of a mile in length, and all promenading the charming place in the utmost imaginable security; now you see them suddenly take to their heels; in a few seconds more, they have all disappeared. You could hardly have supposed they could have more expeditiously made themselves scarce, had they been spirited up into the clouds by some mysterious agency.

It is not to be wondered at that a smart shower, coming at an unexpected moment, should be to those of both sexes who are fond

of decking their persons with "elegant attire," an object of special aversion; for a more ludicrous, if not pitiable spectacle, than a thoroughly drenched dandy presents, could not be conceived.

Lord Brougham, in a recent number of the Edinburgh Review, mentions, that happening, on one occasion, at an early hour in the morning, to be going with the late Princess Charlotte into her residence in Spring Gardens, he contrasted to her the then desolate appearance of the open space at Charing Cross, with the scene of teeming life it would present in a few hours afterwards, should the princess be in a situation to require any demonstration of the popular attachment. I have often thought of the contrast between the appearance of Hyde Park, at an early hour, in a morning of May or June, and the scene it will present, without the interposition of any accidental cause, in the afternoon of the same day, provided the weather be fine. In the morning, your eye may detect a solitary pedestrian or two, loitering about, or, it may be, going to their day's work; but you might

just as soon expect to find a salamander, if there be such an animal in existence, amidst the everlasting snows of Kamschatka, as to see a vehicle of any description in the Park before breakfast-time. The fashionables, and every one who can sport a phaeton, or gig, are all in bed in the morning; while no hackney-coach or cab, is permitted to enter the Park, no matter though the first nobleman or the highest functionary in the land, constituted the "fare" at the time.

To appear in the Park, before one o'clock in the afternoon, would be considered, in the fashionable world, as decidedly vulgar. In the vocabulary of the aristocratic circles, when a titled personage takes an airing in the Park, any time before three o'clock, it is called a morning drive; and, so far as they themselves are concerned, it is, no doubt, morning; for though, by that time, the day of most other people be more than half gone, theirs is only just beginning. The earlier risers among the working classes in London, get up an hour or two after the higher classes go to bed.

To be seen in the Park, at any hour of the

day, after "the season" is over, would be set down as such a flagrant infringement of the rules which regulate the movements of the fashionables in the metropolis, as would almost justify the acquaintances of the parties committing the transgression, in "cutting" them at once. The circumstance would spread with an electrical rapidity through the circle in which the transgressors moved, and would be universally characterised as "shocking!" "horrible!" and so forth, the parties employing such language accompanying the terms with uplifted hands and significant movements of the muscles of the face. Young ladies, in the absence of balls and marriages to write about, would make the circumstance the subject of pointed allusions in their correspondence with their friends; and thus, in a few days, the conduct of the violator of aristocratic laws would be known, talked about, and universally condemned, from one extremity of the kingdom to the other.

So exceedingly partial are young misses in the upper ranks of life, to "an airing in the Park,"—for such is their favourite expression,—

that they often speak of that fashionable locality in the same way as they do of their lovers. One young lady protests to her acquaintances—and she heaves a deep sigh as she makes the remark—that she is *dying* to be in the Park. A second calls it "quite a dear of a Park;" while a third, with a languishing look, and a peculiar emphasis of expression, characterises it as "*the* dear Park."

CHAPTER III.

TATTERSALL'S AND THE TURF.

Situation and description of Tattersall's—The Yard—The Betting Room—History of Tattersall's—Sketch of Mr. Tattersall—Horse Races—Their origin and history—Newmarket Races—Doncaster Races—Ascot Races—Epsom Races—Miscellaneous remarks—Settling day at Tattersall's—Betting—Making a Book—General observations—The evils of the Turf.

TATTERSALL'S! Who has not heard of the name? And yet how few can associate any thing definite with it? It is true, that most people have a faint notion that it has something to do with horses; but beyond that their knowledge does not extend. In the ear of the sportsman and of the votary of the turf, the very sound of "Tattersall's" has a charm of which none but themselves can have any idea. An illustrative chapter on "Tattersall's and the Turf,"

will, therefore, I am sure, prove highly interesting to the general reader.

Tattersall's is a large house on the right-hand side of Hyde Park Corner, as you enter London from Knightsbridge. It is a place which answers the double purpose of an auction-mart for horses, carriages, gigs, &c., and for all descriptions of betting on the result of the leading horse-races which take place; not to mention various other modes of gambling. To the betting feature of the establishment, I shall refer more particularly hereafter.

In going into Tattersall's, you pass down from Hyde Park Corner, about forty yards, and enter a narrow way, very mews-like in appearance, which you proceed along until you come to a folding door, on your right hand, of considerable dimensions. This door opens into the yard, as it is called, which is about sixty or seventy feet in length, and fifty in breadth, and which, on great days, is so densely populated by the admirers of horse-flesh and the votaries of the turf, that you can hardly find standing room. On ordinary occasions, its

chief tenants consist of a set of persons who may be designated as a kind of hangers-on. Some of them are grooms, who have lost or relinquished their situations, and at present have nothing to do; very probably have become so indolent in their habits, as that they would decline to do any thing were employment offered them. Give them as much porter as they can swill, and allow them to talk with each other about horses, jockies, and other sporting matters, and depend on it they will never dream of "bettering their condition." Others of the groups who are to be seen in the yard at Tattersall's, are men who *were* sporting characters in their day; but who having sported away all their money, can no longer indulge in their propensities for betting. Their appearance at once tells you that they have seen more prosperous times. But even now, in their altered and reduced circumstances, the ruling passion, an affection for sporting matters, retains all its pristine vigour. They lounge about the scene of their former doings in the sporting world. It may seem passing strange, but it is neverthe-

less true, that they derive gratification from the circumstance of being thus suffered to remain in the place in which they were ruined, and in seeing the persons by whom their ruin was effected. Among the other persons who haunt the yard at Tattersall's, are a fair sprinkling of broken-down shopkeepers, and bankrupt tradesmen, most of whom had either a partiality for gambling on horse-races, or carried on a too extensive intercourse with the bottle.

Immediately on entering the yard, towards the left hand, you will, if you do not take care, run against a small fruit-stand kept by a Jew. It is quite a portable affair, and displays so little of secure wooden architecture, that it is in momentary peril of being upset by a gust of wind. Whether it be owing to a want of capital on the part of the Israelitish proprietor of the stand, or whether it be that he has adopted the sound principle in political economy, of regulating the supply by the demand, I cannot tell; but the fact may be verified any day, that the stock of commodities exhibited at any one time is not only exceedingly limited as to

variety, but also as to quantity. In the pear season, the stock of that palatable description of fruit, very seldom exceeds from three to four dozen; of walnuts the average weight may be from two to three pounds, and of nuts, from three to three-and-a-half. These are the only varieties to be seen at one time. So long as the pears are vendible—no matter whether they be eatable or not—the Hebrew proprietor of the stall nobly adheres to his resolution of having nothing to do with the sale of apples. When the season of the pears is over, then the apples, in about the same quantities, are admitted to the honour of a place on the stand. On ordinary occasions, when the attendance is small, the business done by this Jewish merchant is of course limited; but no one who had not the evidence of his own eyes to the fact, would believe what quantities of his commodities he disposes of, at other times, to the turfites who lounge about in that locality. It is quite common to see persons who have lost their little all, or perhaps more, if that be not a contradiction, than their little all; it is quite common to see such persons purchasing pear after pear, or apple after apple,

in rapid succession, and munching them with an expedition, which either indicates the desperate state of mind caused by numerous losses, or an appetite of a most extraordinary voracity for every thing in the shape of pears or apples. Neither the nuts nor walnuts seem to go off rapidly; the demand is usually very limited for them. The purchasers of the Jew's fruit, it may be, are of opinion that they have got nuts enough to crack in the losses they sustained at the last race on which they staked their money. When an unusual demand is expected for either of the commodities, I have generally observed that there is a Hebrew boy who sits on the steps of a small stone erection in the middle of the yard, surrounded by dirty bags tolerably supplied with fruit, and that as the remainders of the stock of the proprietor of the stand get low, they are replenished from the bags of this boy. I have some notion that the latter is a wholesale vendor of these commodities, and that he supplies the retail merchant with them at wholesale prices. I am not, however, it may be proper to say, particularly

wedded to this hypothesis; nor does it matter which way the fact lies, so long as the Jew is able to meet the demands of his customers of the turf, on terms which are profitable to himself and satisfactory to them.

There is a sort of piazza at the further part of the left side of the yard, which shelters from the rain a number of vehicles of all descriptions which are there constantly exposed for sale. From the farthest end of this piazza, there branches off to the left, a lengthened sort of lane, covered at the top, which is set apart for the same purpose. As many as sixty or seventy vehicles, from the splendid carriage down to the humble gig, are frequently to be seen in this place, all intended for sale. I have sometimes thought that if some of the carriages which are here, could write their autobiographies, we should have some strange disclosures made to us respecting the rise, progress, and downfal of the votaries of fashion. Where now are those to whom these carriages once belonged, and in which they lolled about in luxurious ease, never dreaming of what the end was to be? Some

are doubtless, after being reduced in circumstances, in their graves; having, perhaps, died of a broken heart. Others, it may be, are at this moment living in poverty and exile. Worse still—who knows but some of them may be the inmates of a workhouse?

On the right side of the yard there is also a piazza, which, like the other, is eight or ten feet in breadth, and which extends from the entrance up to the corner where Mr. Tattersall or Tat, as he is usually, in familiar language, called, ascends his pulpit to "knock down" horses. This is the space of ground on which the horses which are put up to the hammer, are usually exhibited to the gaze of bidders and others, and where, if any one wishes to see a particular animal trotted, he will find Mr. Tattersall willing and ready to give the word of command, to gratify his wishes. Along this piazza, while the sale is going on, there is always a crowd of persons; some of whom, by venturing too near when the animal is being trotted, occasionally receive rather severe kicks.

On the right hand, on entering the yard, is

the counting-house. In the front, in the right-hand corner, is the spot in which Mr. Tattersall places and mounts his rostrum, when about to put some of the "fine animals" which fall into his hands, to the hammer; and on the left is the most important place of all, namely, the betting-room, in which, as will be presently seen, many thousands of families have been ruined by the gambling habits of their representatives, whether in the capacity of husbands, fathers, or brothers. This room, one would suppose, to be a spacious and comfortable apartment, it being, to all intents and purposes, a place for gambling on a large scale; for every body is aware that the gambling-houses in the metropolis are all fitted up, not only in a comfortable, but most of them in a style of the greatest splendour. Not so in the case of the betting-room at Tattersall's. It is on the ground-floor, and is a gloomy looking, imperfectly ventilated, confined apartment, without a carpet, without any furniture worthy of the name, without any thing, indeed, which could impart to it an air of comfort. And yet so

intent are the various persons who frequent it, on their gambling pursuits, that they are seldom heard to grumble at the want of comfortable accommodation. It is often crowded,—it is always so on great days—with one of the most motley assemblages of human beings ever compressed into an equally limited space. There the proud and, in other places, overbearing nobleman is on a footing of perfect equality with the clownish fishmonger who spends most of those hours not devoted to business, in the tap-room of some humble wine-vaults. The foppish young aristocrat, on the previous night the glory of Almacks, the admired of all the lady admirers in the brilliant assemblage who frequent that place,—may be seen, not only submitting to be unceremoniously jostled about by a bevy of pork-butchers, who, as if actuated by some unaccountable sympathy, are all forcing their way to the door at once, but familiarly conversing and betting with some rough uncultivated Smithfield drover.

There are, in short, in the betting-room at Tattersall's, on all important occasions, every

variety of persons, from the high-titled refined aristocrat, down to the individuals whose callings in life are universally regarded as among the most disreputable which are known; and all, as just stated, are there on a footing of the most entire equality. Those who are for levelling all distinctions in society—who are the advocates of a social, if not a political republic—would enjoy a gratification of the first order, were they to spend an hour or two, on any of the great days, at Tattersall's. They could not wish a better practical exemplification of their principles than they would witness there.

It is right to mention, in thus adverting to the indiscriminate commingling together of peers and plebeians at Tattersall's, that of late years the personal attendance of noblemen has not been so great as it used to be. Many of our sporting peers appear at Tattersall's by proxy; that is to say, they appoint agents, whom they authorize to bet and to gamble for them.

The number of subscribers to Tattersall's is about three hundred. The subscription money

is moderate enough, being only one guinea a-year.

The precise time when Tattersall's was instituted is not known, a circumstance which may be accounted for from the fact, that like many other celebrated establishments, it arose from small beginnings. It is, however, pretty generally understood to have originated about eighty or ninety years ago. Its founder was the grandfather of the present Mr. Tattersall. He was looked on as one of the most experienced men, in all matters pertaining to horse-flesh, in the kingdom. He commenced business simply as an auctioneer in the horse and carriage line; and in that line soon obtained an extensive celebrity, as well as got into a most lucrative trade. He also made a deal of money by the successful running of one of his race-horses called Highflyer. Eventually he built an elegant mansion, which, with the view of perpetuating the memory of the animal through whose achievements on the turf he had gained most of the money expended on it, he called "Highflyer Hall." Mr. Tattersall afterwards became

a proprietor of the "Morning Post" newspaper, and derived a considerable yearly revenue from it. He also purchased the copyright of the "English Chronicle," but, whether it turned out a profitable speculation or otherwise, I am not able to say. Mr. Tattersall, at his death, left a handsome fortune, as well as the business, to his son. The latter also managed the establishment, with great success, for a long course of years. On his death, it fell into the hands of his son, the present Mr. Tattersall. Mr. Tattersall has a brother who has an interest in the business, but he is comparatively little known to the public. Nobody who ever saw Mr. Tattersall presiding in his rostrum during the sale of horses, can resist the conviction that Nature intended him for an auctioneer of those "noble animals." In the rostrum he is obviously in his proper sphere. He enters on his avocations with heart and soul. He has no ideas of happiness beyond the auction-yard. The very sight of the hammer, or rather of himself wielding the hammer, is to him an enjoyment of the first magnitude. His own voice, when

expatiating in terms of praise of any horse that "*is* to be sold," has inexpressible charms to his ear. There is not a sound in the world that is half so musical to him,—except it be the sound of some voice whose proprietor is making a "handsome bidding" for the animal in the market. Mr. Tattersall, though a man of few words compared with the voluble school of auctioneers who have Mr. George Robins as their head, is a very adroit and successful knight of the hammer. He is dexterous in discovering who among all who surround him are the parties that really mean to buy, and to them in succession he earnestly addresses himself. His very look, unaccompanied with a single word, has, in innumerable cases, appealed so forcibly to some bystander, as to draw out "another guinea for the horse," even when the person had fully resolved in his own mind not to advance, on any earthly consideration, a single sixpence more. He holds in utter contempt the bombastical and unintelligible diction of Mr. George Robins: he not only deems it in the most miserable taste, but he regards it as

a complete waste of time on the part of the auctioneer, and a positive insult to the persons assembled. Besides, he is convinced that by his own plain homely, but expressive style, he "fetches" a far better price for his "fine animals," than he would by the most high-sounding clap-trap sentences that human ingenuity could string together. He usually contents himself with mentioning the pedigree of the horse, praising him as one of the finest ever known; affecting to be quite shocked at the idea of selling him at the price offered; assuring the company that it would be positively giving him away, which of course neither he nor the proprietor can afford to do; and regretting that he cannot bid himself.

When, however, he has any first-rate horses "entrusted to his care," especially if he see some noblemen or other parties around him, who are likely to "bite," he deviates from his usual course, and tries his hand at a little flattery of these persons, trusting to the potent effects of that commodity in procuring some better "biddings" for the animal. "There, my lords and

gentlemen," will Tat. exclaim in such cases; "there's a chance for you. You'll never get such a chance again. My lord duke, I know your stud is unrivalled; but this beautiful, this unrivalled mare would be an honour and an ornament to it. Do you say three hundred and fefty* guineas for her? Three hundred and fefty guineas are bid: thank you, my lord duke, I admire your taste. She possesses rare blood; just only look at the symmetry of her form; she is perfection itself. I could, but I will not, dwell on her matchless beauties,—they are not to be described. Only three hundred and fefty guineas bid for her. My lord duke, she will be yours if some one else does not——— Three hundred and *sixty* guineas are bid for her. I knew that she is too great a prize to be suffered to escape at such a price. Really, my lord duke, with your lordship's known skill and taste in horse-flesh, I should be sorry if you allowed such an opportunity of proving that you possess this taste, to pass. Three hundred

* Tattersall invariably substitutes the "e" for the "i" in pronouncing the words "fifty, thirty," and so forth.

and *eighty* guineas bid for her;—thank you again, my lord duke; I'm sure you'll not repent your bargain. Does any one say more for her? Three hundred and *ninety* guineas are bid. You see, my lord duke, your admiration of this beautiful and excellent mare is not peculiar. She will, positively, adorn your lordship's stud, as she did that of royalty, when she belonged to it. Who says the four hundred guineas? She's just a-going. One moment longer, and off she goes. Her action, my lord duke, is beyond all praise; she has no vice; she is a perfect paragon in every way you can take her. I must knock her down, my lord duke; but I would really be sorry to see you lose so noble and charming a creature for the sake of ten paltry guineas. Just say the four hundred guineas and she's yours. Thank you, my lord duke, for adopting my advice. I'm sure you'll never repent your bargain. Going—gone. She *is* yours, my lord duke."

Mr. Tattersall is a dark-looking man, with a rather full face, wearing a reserved expression. He is slightly under the middle size, rather

stoutishly made; and very lame. His age appears to be from fifty to about fifty-five. The number of horses he sometimes sells in one day is almost incredible. There are instances on record, in which the number has been as high as one hundred and eighty. Upwards of one hundred is quite a common occurrence, to say nothing of carriages, gigs, harness, &c. When the work in either way is heavy, he is assisted by his brother.

Mr. Tattersall has the reputation of being an excellent-hearted man. He is a great favourite with all who frequent his premises, or have occasion to do business with him. His brother, who is considerably younger, has a very gentlemanly appearance.

From Tattersall's and Mr. Tattersall himself, let us now proceed to the Turf, in the sense in which the word applies to horse-racing.

Horse-racing, as will be afterwards seen, is an amusement almost peculiar to Great Britain. In ancient Greece it seems to have obtained to a very great extent; for the Olympic Games appear to have principally consisted of horse-

racing; only that the animals, instead of running as in this country singly, with riders on their backs, often contested the prize with chariots at their heels. "Nimrod," the most popular writer of the day, on all matters appertaining to the "Chase, the Road, and the Turf," says, that in some respects the Olympic racing closely resembled our own. He adds, that the Greeks "had their course for full-aged horses, and their course for colts; and their prize for which mares only started, corresponding with our Epsom Oaks Stakes." In regard to the riders of the horses, there was a great difference between the racing at the Olympic Games and that which obtains at Newmarket, Doncaster, Ascot, or Epsom. The proprietors of the horses that contended for the prize, seem in every case to have been themselves the riders. At all events, it is certain that the highest personages in Greece were in the habit of riding at the Olympic races. Philip, king of Macedon, and Hiero, king of Syracuse, were among the royal jockeys of ancient Greece. The latter was not only accustomed to ride on

these occasions, but on some occasions, we do not know whether frequently or not, won the prize. Pindar, as stated by the writer already referred to, mentions, in his first Olympic Ode, which is inscribed to the sovereign of Syracuse, the horse Phrenicus, as that which he rode when, on one occasion, he was the winner of the Olympic crown. There is another most important point of dissimilarity between the horse-racing of ancient Greece, and that which is now so common in this country; I allude to the circumstance of the entire absence of that gambling and other dishonest and unworthy practices, which are not only the disgrace of the English Turf, but which attach a deep stigma to the English character. The Greeks contended at these races for nothing but the honour of winning the prize.

Of the earlier history of the Turf in this country little is known. It is uncertain at what period horse-racing first became a recognized and favourite amusement in England. Neither is it known whether it was imported from any other country, or was of spontaneous growth.

The latter is, perhaps, the most probable supposition, as we have no reason to believe that horse-racing was one of the amusements of any of those nations which, at different times, conquered this country. It is certain that it could not have been borrowed from any of the neighbouring nations, no traces being perceptible of its ever having obtained among them. The general opinion of those who have thought on the subject is, not only that horse-races are the native production of the British soil, but that they have existed, though not so common as of late years, ever since a century or two after the Romans took possession of the country. Strutt, who devoted a great deal of attention to this subject, mentions, in his "Sports and Pastimes of England," that the first indication he was able to discover of horse-racing obtaining to any extent, was found in a work written in the reign of Henry the Second. From the frequent allusions made to the race-course, and the breeding of race-horses, in the days of Queen Elizabeth, there can be no question that the Turf was, in her reign, extensively patronised.

In James the First's time, horse-racing seems to have got more and more into vogue; for he was himself a great supporter of the Turf. It is generally supposed that he was the party who established the races at Enfield Chase, where the prize was a golden bell. It is certain that he warmly patronised, by his personal presence and otherwise, the leading races which previouly existed. Imagining that the Arabian horses were fleeter than those bred in England, he gave five hundred pounds * for an Arabian steed; but the animal was beaten with the greatest ease by our English horses.

Charles the First had also a marked partiality for horse-racing; but his reign was too troublesome to admit of his indulging to any great extent in his favourite amusement. It was in his reign, and chiefly under his own auspices, that the Turf was established in Newmarket—now so celebrated for its races and its horses.

In the intervening period between the death of Charles and the Restoration, the Turf expe-

* Equal at that time, perhaps, to £2,000 at present.

rienced a great decline. The Puritans strenuously attacked horse-racing on the ground of its being productive of a world of immorality; and their attacks were not without effect. These well-meaning men may in their own minds have magnified the evils which sprang from the Turf; but it would appear from the concurrent testimony of writers, who lived at that period, that it was a fruitful source of immorality.

At the Restoration, horse-racing again revived, and being zealously patronised by the monarch, it became a more favourite amusement than it had ever been found before. Charles was the first sovereign who gave plates from his own private purse, to be run for at all the leading sporting places. At these races he entered horses in his own name, and with the view of obtaining the best cattle, he despatched his master of the horse to Barbary, and other parts of the East, with money to bring home the best breeds that could be procured. James the Second and William the Third continued the royal plates, but were not by any means active patrons of the races. In the reign of

Queen Anne, the passion for the Turf continued to extend itself; and in the reigns of the first two Georges it had become almost universal. About a century ago it had reached such a height that there was scarcely a village in the country that could not boast, if it was a matter for boasting, of its annual, if not more frequent, horse-races. Even the "New Sporting Magazine," a periodical which of necessity supports the Turf,—even this periodical admits that the extent to which horse-racing prevailed in England about one hundred years ago, was attended with the most injurious results to society. "So deeply rooted," says that journal, "was the interest taken in it (racing) by all classes of society, and so large a portion of the earnings of the lower orders was risked on this their favourite amusement, that it was deemed prudent, by act of parliament, to put a stop to the petty races which took place *in almost every village*, and to the *dissipation consequent thereon*." I will not in this place, follow up this admission of the social and moral evils produced by horse-racing, as that is a point on which I

shall have something to say towards the conclusion of the chapter.

Up to this period, the value of the plates run for, was, in the great majority of cases, exceedingly low, not on the average exceeding 15*l.* The act referred to, namely, the 13th of George the Second, prohibited all races where the prize run for was under the value of 50*l.* This had the effect of putting down a vast number of the races which then obtained in the country.

George the Third was of too retiring and domesticated a turn to be an active patron of the Turf. Still, as his predecessors for some generations before him had been in the habit of giving certain prizes, he did not feel disposed to withdraw them. George the Fourth again was most enthusiastically fond of the Turf, as he was indeed of gambling and gaiety of every kind. Some of the horses bred by himself were equal to any in the country, and repeatedly carried off the Derby and the Oaks. His brother, our late sovereign, was, on the other hand, as averse as he was partial to the Turf.

Still, being one of the "good easy men" described by Shakspeare, he did violence to his own tastes by always appearing on the Royal Stand, on Ascot Heath, when the state of his health was such as to admit of his leaving the Castle.

The number of races of any note which are still kept up in England and Scotland, is about one hundred and twelve. Among these, the most important and most celebrated, are Newmarket, Doncaster, Ascot, and Epsom.

NEWMARKET, ever since its establishment in the reign of Charles the First, has maintained the ascendancy over all the others, though the palm of superiority has of late been disputed with it by the Epsom races of June. Prior to 1753 there were only two races in the year at Newmarket; now there are seven. In this respect Newmarket has a pre-eminence over every other race-course in England; for in no other instance are there more than two meetings in one year: in most cases there is only one. Formerly there were six and eight-mile races at Newmarket; now the greatest distance run is

four miles. Even this is a great deal too much. It always more or less injures the horses;—sometimes it kills them outright. To avoid the latter evil, there is now an understanding among the competitors and their jockeys, that in all four-mile heats the horses will trot half the distance. The race-course at Newmarket is circular. The last meeting in the year continues for a week.

But as neither Newmarket nor Doncaster can, properly speaking, be considered a legitimate subject for a work which professes to treat of the metropolis, I shall pass over the former place without further observation, and after a remark or two on the Doncaster races, come to those held at Ascot and Epsom, as the vast majority of persons who attend these races, or bet on the results, reside in the modern Babylon; and consequently render the illustration and discussion of racing at Ascot and Epsom, a necessary part of my plan.

Doncaster Races were instituted upwards of seventy years ago by Colonel St. Leger, a gentleman residing in the neighbourhood. They

soon acquired a celebrity and importance equalled only by those of Newmarket, Ascot, and Epsom. Of late years, however, the Doncaster races have been rapidly on the wane, chiefly in consequence of the notoriously dishonest practices which have been committed at the St. Leger by various gangs of unprincipled gamblers from London. With the view of lessening as far as possible the chance of future frauds or tricks of any kind, the money to be paid by those who mean to run for the St. Leger, the great prize of the races, has been raised, within the last few years, from twenty-five to fifty sovereigns. When the amount was twenty-five pounds, it was, to use sporting phraseology, "pay or play;" that is, that if the party did not choose to run his horse, he should forfeit the whole of his money: now, in the event of his voluntarily withdrawing his horse, or any circumstance occurring to prevent the animal's running, he only forfeits half of his subscription, namely, twenty-five pounds. The St. Leger prize is a large silver cup of the value of four hundred and fifty guineas; the winner

being entitled, in addition, to the whole of the amount subscribed, after deducting some necessary expenses. The amount received in money varies according to the number of horses that are entered for the contest. It is sometimes above 2000*l.*; at other times it is under 1000*l.* The race-course at Doncaster is nearly two miles in length, and is of a semi-circular form. The races last four days; Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Tuesday is the great day, the St. Leger being then run for. The Doncaster races take place about the middle of September. There is only one meeting in the course of the year.

Next come Ascot Races. Ascot is in the immediate vicinity of Windsor; and as the great race is for the gold cup given by the sovereign, all the arrangements are made by the Earl of Errol, Master of the Buckhounds, assisted by two of the stewards of the Jockey Club. These races are in a peculiar sense under the patronage of royalty. The sovereign, except when some circumstance of pressing urgency prevents it, always makes a

point of being present. Even George IV., who had so strong an aversion to making his appearance in public, scarcely ever omitted being present at the Ascot races. And such was the anxiety of William IV. to give these races whatever *eclat* they could derive from the patronage of royalty, that when, through physical debility, he was himself unable to attend them, he desired Queen Adelaide to honour them with her presence. The reader will, therefore, be prepared for the information, that Ascot races being thus so specially patronized by the sovereign, are better attended by the elite of fashionable society than any of the other races. At Epsom, as might indeed be expected from its greater proximity to the metropolis, the numerical attendance is much larger; but, perhaps I speak within limits when I say, that twice as many of the higher classes are usually present at Ascot races, as there are at those of Epsom. Perhaps the largest and most brilliant assemblage ever present at Ascot races, was on the day on which the gold cup, in 1824, was run for. I have heard it remarked, that it is doubt-

ful whether the number of the aristocracy that were present on that occasion, was not greater than the number that were absent, including both those who remained in town and those who were scattered throughout the three kingdoms; certain it is, that so much of the wealth, and rank, and fashion of England, has seldom been witnessed in any place.

As Ascot Heath is twenty-six miles distant from London; those who would insure good places on the stand, require to start at an early hour in the morning. Those who are later than seven o'clock have but a poor chance of seeing, or being seen to advantage. As early as four, you see magnificent equipages in, what an American would call, pretty considerable numbers, proceeding at a rattling rate along the road from Piccadilly to Hyde Park Corner. Gradually the number increases until six o'clock, when the road is crowded with them. You wonder where they can all have come from. You had no idea before, that there were so many magnificent equipages in London. You would be greatly surprised to see so large a number

of ladies out of their beds at so early an hour; that being so marked a deviation from their usual habits; you are doubly astonished that they should muster in such numbers for the purpose of witnessing a horse-race—a sport which so peculiarly belongs to the lords of the creation. Yet so it is; there is hardly a lady of rank and fashion in the metropolis that does not make a point of being present at Ascot races. The unpleasantness of early rising, or it may be, of not going to bed at all; the deafening din caused by carriages, horses, and pedestrians in particular parts of the road; the danger of being half-broiled by the sun, and half choked by dust; to say nothing of the certainty of having their splendid dresses more or less injured, either by clouds of dust or showers of rain, or some other mischievous agency; these are evils which are either suffered with the patience of the martyr, or braved with the fortitude of the true philosopher,—the empress of fashion having decreed that the wives, and daughters, and sisters of the aristocracy, should appear at Ascot on that particular occasion.

The locality of Ascot races is one of peculiar interest, both on account of the place itself and the associations which are connected with it. Not far from it is the noble forest of Windsor, and Windsor Castle, which last has, for so many years, been the favourite abode of the sovereigns of England. And in the vicinity of Windsor were also the scenes of Falstaff's amorous adventures with the "Merry Wives," the most popular, as it is perhaps the cleverest, of Shakspeare's comedies; to say nothing of the circumstance of Pope having so often resided there, and made its forest the theme of some of his most beautiful poetry. These are attractions, however, which lose all their power on a race-day. The parties are not only too fatigued by having risen at so early an hour in the morning, but their minds are too much engrossed with the events of the day, and their attention too much distracted by the crowds of people and equipages by which they are surrounded, to have any relish for such associations.

The race-course at Ascot is beautifully

situated. The scenery around is exceedingly pleasant to the eye. It is a place, from a visit to which the admirer of nature would derive no ordinary pleasure at any time. Fancy then, what it must be on a fine day, when the great majority of the beauty and fashion of England are present. A more dazzling sight is not to be witnessed. How unlike the every-day world in which one is obliged to live! From the excellent arrangements made by the Earl of Errol, the brilliant assemblage not only enjoy far greater comfort than is enjoyed by the vast masses which attend Epsom, but the company is seen to much greater advantage. Of the additional charm imparted to the scene, by the presence of the Sovereign, I need say nothing. If the attraction of royalty was great under the sway of a king, what must it be under that of a virgin Queen, not yet out of her teens! Those only who were present, can have any idea of the eclat which the presence of her Majesty conferred on the last Ascot races. It was a positive luxury to see the easy and affable manner with which she mingled in the

brilliant assemblage, and the condescending way in which she acknowledged the manifestations of affectionate regard which were made to her. There were thousands of ladies there, married and unmarried, who might have learned a lesson as to their own deportment, from the example of Queen Victoria. How strikingly did her unassuming, familiar, and inartificial manner contrast with the pompousness and *hauteur* of their demeanour!

Ascot races are of remote origin. They can be traced as far back as the commencement of the reign of Charles the Second; for it is proved beyond all doubt that he established races in the neighbourhood, out of which the Ascot races arose. Whether every intermediate sovereign, from his day to the present, patronised those races by their presence, as well as by their purse, is a point which I am unable to decide.

Ascot races last four days. They begin on the Tuesday of the second week of June, and end on the following Friday. The two great days are Tuesday and Thursday; and of

these two the last is the greatest. That is the day on which the Gold Cup given by the Sovereign is run for.

Though, for the reasons already mentioned, the attendance at Ascot races is far inferior to that at the Epsom races, the amount of betting is not proportionably smaller. This may be accounted for from two circumstances. The first is, that the parties present being, in general, much more opulent than those who attend at Epsom, the bettings are in most cases a great deal deeper. The second circumstance which accounts for the betting at Ascot being much heavier in proportion to the number of parties present than at Epsom, is that of many thousands of people betting on the result, though they do not stir out of London. They agree to abide by the decision of the judge as given in the public journals; and pay or receive their money accordingly.

I now come to the EPSOM RACES, which were instituted in 1779. Lord Derby gave the stakes which still go by the name of the Derby, immediately on establishing the races. On the

following year he instituted the Oaks race, calling the prize by that name, because it was the name of his country seat. It is curious enough that his own horse Bridget won the first Oaks. Epsom races take place only once a-year. An attempt was made a few years since to establish a race at Epsom in September, but there being no prospect of succeeding, the idea was abandoned.

Epsom races last four days. They take place in June, commencing on Tuesday and ending on Friday. Thursday, being the day of the Derby, is the great, the important day, always big with the fate of thousands of gamblers, some on a large, some on a smaller scale. Friday is the next greatest day in point of importance. On that day the Oaks is run for, but the attendance on that day is not at all to be compared with that which graces the contest for the Derby. Still less important is the Oaks as compared with the Derby, in regard to the amount of betting on the result. Beyond the mere circle of the confirmed and recognized Turfites themselves, betting on the result of the

Oaks is scarcely known. What the extent of the betting on the Derby is, is a point to which I shall afterwards have occasion to refer. For a full fortnight before the Derby day, you hear of little else than the race that is to be run on that day. Among all classes of society, from the highest aristocrats down to the humblest mechanics in the metropolis, is the Derby the subject of conversation, and among all are bets laid, to a greater or less amount, according to the circumstances of the parties, on the issue of the contest. The morning of the day arrives, and for once in their lives the cockneys get out of bed before six o'clock in the morning. From four to ten, continued streams of persons in carriages, on horseback, and on foot, are seen pouring in the direction of Epsom. At so early an hour, as from four to five, you see nearly the whole of London in commotion, consequent on the determination of its population to be present at the races at Epsom. You see them hovering about you in every direction, previous to a regular start, all busily engaged in making the necessary preparations for the

contemplated journey. Some are loading their coach, or phaeton, or gig, or other vehicle, with those provisions which the cravings of their appetites may render necessary before they return home. Others are taking the precaution of filling their vehicles with cloaks, Mackintoshes, umbrellas, and other et ceteras, in case St. Swithin should take it into his head to give them a little taste of what he can do in the way of marring holiday enjoyments in the open air. Others are anathematizing themselves and every body else, because there is something wrong in the harness of the cattle which are to drive them to the race-course, or because some other unexpected untoward incident occurs to disconcert their plans or delay their starting. In a word, there is no end to the diversity of circumstances in which the parties are placed who are preparing to set out for Epsom. So general is the bustle and motion around you, that you can scarcely resist the conviction that every body is out of bed, and that the entire population of London are preparing for a trip to the race-course. How striking the

contrast which the appearance of the streets presents on the morning of the Derby, to what it does on any other day, when you only see here and there some lazy apprentice creeping towards his employer's; or, it may be, some solitary chimney-sweep, crawling along, with brush in hand and soot-bags on his back. And see the aspect of the various streets and roads which lead to the great road which conducts you to Epsom. See the lines of carriages, cabriolets, carts, and every conceivable vehicle; the rows of horsemen, and the streams of pedestrians. You are surprised at as well as gratified with the sight. You ask yourself, where can all the horses and vehicles, to say nothing of the human beings you see before you, have come from? Do not press just yet for an answer to the question. Repeat it when you have got into the great road, a mile or two beyond Brixton, into which all the branch roads have, like tributary streams to a vast river, poured their respective complements of men, women, horses, donkeys, dogs, and vehicles of every kind. When you have

fairly got out of town, you will have plenty of time to ask yourself the question. Such is the crowded state of the road, that you will often have difficulty in forcing your way onwards. Such a scene you never before witnessed; and you never dreamt that such a sight was to be seen. You see nothing before or behind you, but a vast promiscuous mass of vehicles, horses, pedestrians, &c., all moving in one direction. The scene has all the appearance of a procession, except that it wants regularity and arrangement. You already feel as if you were in a great measure compensated for the unpleasantness of getting out of bed at so early an hour, and for any pecuniary sacrifice you may have made to procure a horse or vehicle. And not the least interesting feature in the scene, is the motley character of the bipeds and quadrupeds before you. The party in the splendid carriage on your right hand, consists of two young noblemen and two dashing cyprians. In the go-cart on your left are three Whitechapel butchers, in the employ of Mr. Alderman Scales. Observe

the dandified aristocratic airs of the youthful sprigs of nobility, and see the prudish demeanor and affected modesty of the couple of "frail fair ones" who sit beside them. Then contrast with this the blunt unceremonious, "blow-me-tight" manner of the cattle-slayers in the go-cart. They have no more polish, no more refinement, no more affectation in their deportment, than had the half-dozen bullocks they slaughtered on the previous day. Not less marked is the contrast in the appearance of the horses of the two parties. The steeds in the aristocratic carriage, look quitè as haughty and as full of airs as their masters. They are the high-mettled sort, and as if spurning the ordinary speed, the driver finds it a difficult task to restrain them. They are just as pampered in their own way as their masters, and a drive down to Epsom is only diversion to them. Far otherwise is it with the animal that drags the vehicle which contains the trio of butchers. He has all the appearance of a hard-worked horse. The "shine is taken out of him." His head hangs down, and his whole appearance indi-

cates that his spirits are broken by the conjoint agency of the whip and too much labour. If horses do soliloquise, there can be no question that he is congratulating himself on the crowded state of the road, which prevents his being driven at a more rapid pace. Take care you don't tread on the donkey with the little urchin on its back, which is immediately before you. Donkeys are proverbial for their reluctance to quicken their pace. This one is no exception to the rule.

"He is a donkey wot won't go,"

and, therefore, the little fellow who sits astride on his back, is as busy as he can be, in

"Walloping him, so, so, so."

You little rascal, don't be so cruel. What a pity some one does not seize the cane with which you beat the poor long-eared creature so hard, and apply it to your own shoulders! It would do one's heart good to witness the transfer. A taste of the "walloping" process applied to himself, would teach the young rogue to lay it on a little more leniently on the sides

of the unfortunate donkey. But where are the officers of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals? Where are they? echoes every humane bosom. They ought to muster strong along the road to Epsom on Derby-day. Do you see that country-looking man in a plain gig, drawn by a still plainer horse? He is a retired gentleman with 100,000*l.* You observe that dashing mustachioed personage in his handsome phaeton, with two beautiful greys? he is not only a beggar in circumstances, but was confined in the Queen's Bench prison so late as last week. That is the Earl of ——, two or three yards before you. He is an inveterate gambler on the Turf, and has probably bets to the amount of 20,000*l.* depending on the result of the present Derby. You see a poorly-clad pedestrian on the side of the road about a yard from him: he is a journeyman shoemaker, who, though unable to muster the wherewith to pay for any conveyance down, has staked five shillings against some other son of St. Crispin, on the issue of the contest. You are struck with the diversity

you observe in the appearance of the crowds who are wending their way to Epsom: far greater is the difference which exists, could we only perceive it in all its extent, in the circumstances of the parties. But I shall have occasion to glance again at this topic when I come to speak of the aspect of the assemblage on the Downs* immediately before and after the running of the leading races.

As every body, always excepting the inveterate gambler, who is bent on plundering as many of his fellow-men as he possibly can, thinks of nothing else; as every body but him has left London for the purpose of enjoying a holiday, you see nothing but smiling, contented, happy faces around you. They have by this time conquered the drowsiness and want of spirit with which they had to contend—owing to their rising at so unusually early an hour—when setting out on their journey; and now they have all the appearance of persons who are determined to be merry and comfort-

* The name by which the part where the races take place is usually called.

able. It is true, that many of them besides the systematic gambler, have pretty considerable sums dependent on the issue of the races; but somehow or other, they either forget all pecuniary cares and anxieties for the moment, or they all lay the flattering unction to their souls, that they are to be gainers. It never occurs to them that some body must be a loser. Oh, happy absence of thought! It is only a pity that the blessed delusion does not last a little longer.

Is the reader fond of contrasts? See then the altered aspect of the crowds who have been to Epsom, as they return to town in the evening. You can hardly believe them the same persons you saw proceeding to the Derby in the morning. Where is all their gaiety? Where the loud laugh and the felicitous joke? Where the liveliness of manner — where the abundant flow of spirits? They are all gone. See how sad and dispirited, with comparatively few exceptions, the streams of people seem. Loss of money in many cases, and exhaustion in others, have worked the change. But I am

partly anticipating what will be said with greater propriety in an after part of the chapter.

Until twelve o'clock crowds continue to arrive on the race-course not only from London, but from all parts of the country within a circuit of twenty or thirty miles. What an immense concourse of human beings! There cannot be less than 250,000 persons there. And see how well dressed the vast majority of them are! Ragged coats or faded silks are but rarely witnessed. Whatever may be the condition of the pocket or the belly, there is no cause of complaint, with very few exceptions, on the score of the back. If there be a lack of money or of food, there is no lack of raiment. And how elegantly dressed are a very large proportion of the immense assemblage! The women are gorgeously so. You would find it a task of some difficulty to point out a score of ill dressed females within a moderate distance of the place at which you stand. Witness the forest of waving plumes of feathers. You wonder where they all came from; you had no idea before, that London could have furnished

such a supply. How brilliant the aspect which the vast numbers of ladies who are present give to the immense assemblage! Their attire is elegance and splendour combined — their persons are handsome—and the charm caused by such a display of beauty and fashion would be complete, but for the unpleasant fact obtruding on your mind, that a very considerable portion of them are of exceptionable character. But let that pass. The face of the adjoining hill, extensive as is the space it embraces, appears as if instinct with life. Persons of all ranks and classes are there crowded together as densely as it is possible for them to be. See also both sides of the race-course, fully a mile and a half in length. Carriages, coaches, phaetons, cabs, carts; vehicles of all sorts, in short, are there ranged as closely as they can be, three or four deep, from nearly one extremity of the course to the other. And so thickly tenanted are they, chiefly with elegantly attired ladies, that it is with difficulty the parties can find standing room.

The people on the ground are so closely

wedged together along the margins of the course, that one might as soon hope to make his way through a stone erection, as to force through them. On the outside are donkeys without number, some of them with and others without carts, but all are there with the view of being in some way or other, turned to profitable account. Many of them draw fruit, gingerbread, and other eatables to the stand; while others carry the materials out of which stalls of various kinds and for various purposes are constructed. The "show" party muster strong. There is not a sight on earth you could wish to see which you may not see here; or rather which the showmen do not assure you is to be seen. Prodigies of nature are so numerous, that one could have had no idea before, that she had ever made so many, even had all been collected from the time of Adam downwards, and from all parts of the world. As for legerdemain tricks, there is literally no end to them. The conjurers do so much, and promise such a great deal more, that one is surprised they cannot, by some slight of hand expedient, convert the

stones or the grass under their feet into money, and by thus enriching themselves at once, do away with all future necessity of asking the public to pay for their exhibitions. In the theatrical world, great things are always done at Epsom on the Derby day. Macbeth, or any thing else you please, either in the tragic or comic department of the drama, will be performed before your wondering eyes, in about five minutes' time. And see the actors and the actresses; the scenes and the dresses! Did any one ever witness any thing half so theatrical? I never did. Then see a great many small tables, of very plain appearance, scattered about you in all directions; and see those tables surrounded by twelve or fifteen persons. Don't these persons look very simple like? Do you not fancy you see stupidity in their countenances; they *are* very simple and stupid, for they are playing at the game called thimble-rigging, and the rogues who are the owners of the tables are victimising them; in other words, are cheating them of their money with astonishing expedition. Those large tents you see here

and there, and everywhere, are so many portable hells or gambling places, in which the work of plunder is going on at a fearful rate. Thousands are on the eve of ruin by the result of the impending race; the ruin of the foolish persons who are throwing the dice there, is already proceeding at a most rapid pace.

The horses about to start appear on the field, and the work of betting, as people see them with their own eyes, begins afresh. In a few minutes more, the bell rings to summon the animals to the starting point and the starting position. That moment there is a rush on the part of the tens of thousands who were occupied in amusing themselves in various ways outside, towards the dense masses of men, women, horses, vehicles, &c. which line the margins of the course. A few minutes elapse between the ringing of the bell and the issue of the race being declared. And what an important fraction of time is that to thousands who are present! Their prosperity or ruin—their future happiness or misery in this world—their affluence or beggary—the weal or the wretchedness of

their wives and children, are all wrapt up in the events of five or six minutes. Imagine then, the corroding, the consuming anxiety of such persons in the brief interval between the ringing of the bell and the decision of the contest. Oh, the agonies of the suspense endured in those few minutes! The world affords but few instances of an equal amount of mental torment being suffered in so limited a space. See how pale many a countenance suddenly turns. See the absorbed mind as indicated by the fixed eye and unmeaning stare. And were you near enough you might almost hear, you might certainly feel, the palpitations of the beating heart. The signal is given for starting. "Go!" shouts a loud voice at the starting post. The horses are all off. Now commences the frightful tempest of conflicting feelings in the breasts of multitudes before you. The horse which a party has backed against the field, starts fair; he is a-head. Imagine, he who can, the hope and joy mingled with fear which agitate such a person's bosom. The animal is distanced by some fleeter steed; the demon of despair seizes

the party in a moment, in his iron grasp. He is a ruined man; his wife and family are in one moment hurled from the heights of affluence, to the lowest depths of poverty. He can scarcely support himself; he would fall prostrate on the ground, but that he is kept up by the pressure of the crowd. Had he the means and the opportunity, the probability is that he would, in the agony of his remorse and despair, that moment destroy himself. This is no imaginary picture—no exaggerated description of the tempest which rages in a man's bosom, when he has been infatuated enough to stake his all on the result of a horse-race, and that result has been adverse. It is only a few years since a case was brought before the public which fully equalled the one I have here supposed. An hon. gentleman, one belonging to a noble family of distinction, and his own name well known to all the fashionable world, not only staked but lost on the Derby of the year to which I allude, more by some thousands than he was able to pay. To such a state of excitement was his mind worked up before he knew

that the event was against him, that he was heard audibly, though nervously to utter—though the fact was unknown to himself—while the race was being run, "The D——* wins" —"The D—— wins!"—"The D—— wins!" The horse he had backed lost; he was a ruined man. He had not the means of committing suicide on the spot, and besides, the bustle around would have deterred him from the attempt; but on his return home, the very first act he did as soon as he retired to his own room, was to take a pistol and blow out his brains.

The moment the winner of the races is declared, the Stand, as it is called, is broken up, and the dense mass of people disperse themselves sufficiently to enjoy elbow-room. Portable dinners and lunches are now produced by all who were wise enough to provide themselves with such useful affairs before leaving town. Sandwiches are as plentiful as the blackberries of Falstaff. Thousands of persons, without being at all ceremonious, convey these tit-bits,

* Naming a particular horse.

with an expedition quick as thought, to their mouths, and not less promptly are they disposed of. Here and there you see the wine or brandy bottle making its appearance, and without loss of time is it emptied of its contents. Ladies who, at home or at parties, would blush to do more than take two or three sips of the liquid extracted from the grateful juice, now quaff a full glass, and it may be a second, with as much despatch, and as little ceremony, as would an officer of the Tenth Hussars. Eating, in some shape or other, may be said to be everywhere the order of the day; for most of those who took no dinner with them, purchase a pennyworth of bread, biscuit, or ginger-bread. In the shape of vendible liquids, there are sundry articles, severally baptized porter, gin, and ginger-beer. If you have nothing drinkable of your own, you are glad to become purchasers; for what between the heat of the weather, the dust that is flying about, and the extreme pressure of the crowd, from which you have just partly escaped, you feel as thirsty as if you could drink up the Thames at

one draught. Do you patronise the porter, the gin, or the ginger-beer? No matter which; you will soon discover that they are all the same in this one respect,—that the one-half, and the largest half too, consists of water; and as if to aggravate the evil, there is strong reason to suspect that it is not of the purest sort. The truth is, that the liquids vended at Epsom races are like the razors immortalised by Peter Pindar the younger—made to sell, not to drink. The poor wight who is doomed to drink either of the ungrateful liquids, can scarcely help cursing the hardness of his destiny, when he hears, in the vehicle next to him, the bursting of a bottle of delicious champagne, and sees glass after glass transferred to some gentleman's or lady's lips. Our enjoyments are said to be heightened by contrasting them with the privations of others; not less true is it that the magnitude of the evils we are doomed to suffer is increased, when we compare those evils with the good things enjoyed by our neighbours. Philosophers may talk as they please about the excellence and beauty of fortitude; and moralists may tell us

that it is our duty to be content with our lot; it is easy enough to preach up doctrines like these: it is a very different, and rather difficult matter to practise them under such circumstances as I am attempting to describe. I should cheerfully perform a pilgrimage of some distance to see the man without a drop of anything drinkable, while almost expiring of thirst, and yet, without a murmur or the slightest feeling of dissatisfaction with his circumstances, could see his next neighbour quaffing glass after glass of the choicest champagne.

The ground is again all in a hubbub. Every thing around seems instinct with human life and motion. Your ears are almost rendered deaf by the Babel of sounds which salute, or, rather, grate upon them. Could you have before supposed that it was within the compass of possibility that any person however "gifted with the gab," could have been so voluble, if not so eloquent, in praise of his ginger-beer, as that stentorian-voiced fellow who is bawling out the pretended good qualities of his wash? Hear again, that unshaved ruffian-looking person

praising his ginger-bread to the skies. Don't you wonder that that young rascal without hat, cap, or napkin,—without anything indeed worthy of the name of clothing, but with a face which has clearly not come in contact with water for the last eight days,—don't you wonder that he is not quite hoarse if not speechless, from the very excess of his oratorical efforts to attract purchasers for his pies? To be sure, such exertions would kill any one else, but these fellows are inured to the thing: it has become a second nature to them; a mere matter-of-course affair.

The thimble-riggers are reaping a rich harvest from the cockney greenhorns, who fancy that they see the thimble which "kivers" the pea. The thimble is lifted; there is no pea there; but the money of the simpleton finds an immediate passage to the pocket of the rogue who is playing at victims. Ah! but though mistaken this time, the greenhorn will not be so again. He watches the rapid motions of the thimble-rigger; he is quite certain where the pea is now. "Half-a-crown!—a crown!—a sovereign!" as

the case may be, "that it's there!" pointing to a particular thimble. It is lifted. Where is the pea? Echo answers, Where? "It is not there any how," observes a clownish-looking country lad who is standing by, but has too much sense to throw his money away. "This beats every thing; this is passing strange," ejaculates the victim. Still he determines not to be "done:" he tries again and again, and he is only "done" the more. At last his money is "done," and therefore he must be "done" playing the game of thimble-rigging.

Far more thriving still, because the stakes are much deeper, is the business which the blacklegs from London are driving within those tented or portable hells which encounter your eye in every direction. See how rapidly the foolish persons who are there risking their sovereigns or five-pound notes, are plundered of their money. Scarcely more insane would be the act of going out, throwing open their pockets, and asking the first person they meet with to empty them of the last shilling they have, than is their conduct in going unto one

of these places for the purpose of playing with a gang of rogues and robbers. The only difference between the two cases is, that in the first, the process of cleaning out would be more expeditiously gone through than it is in the other.

The concluding race takes place. It is over! and there is a universal rush towards the road leading in the direction of home. Such a scene of bustle and confusion as is now presented has been but very rarely witnessed since the creation of the world. Vehicles come in collision, and, what is worse, pedestrians are often jammed between two or more of these vehicles. The sufferers shriek, the ladies scream, and the drivers of the vehicles swear at, and abuse, and blame each other. Horses become restive; legs are broken, and bones are fractured. Great injury is done to the limbs of Her Majesty's subjects: it is fortunate if no lives be lost. The more tender-hearted of the myriads present feel for those who have already suffered, and are filled with fear and trembling lest other and still greater disasters should yet occur. Eventually the ground appears less

densely peopled; the immense concourse assembled are now rapidly undergoing the process of dispersion. The majority of the tenants of the vehicles, and of the equestrians and pedestrians have now forced their way to the road, and are earnestly bound in a homeward direction. Did you ever see such a road? Did you ever before witness such extensive lines—all as close as they can be, so as to be able to move—of carriages, cabriolets, carts, horses and human beings? Never, I will answer for it. You fear there must yet be many accidents before they all get home. Your fears are but too well founded; for I believe there has never yet been a Derby day in which there have not been a greater or less number of accidents; many of them serious: it is well if none prove fatal.

Has the day been dry? Well, then, such a ludicrous spectacle as that presented by those who have been to Epsom, on their return, was never seen. Their throats, not even excepting the throats of the most fashionable and delicate ladies, are so many dust-holes on a small scale. Their eyes are imbedded in dust; while their

carriages, cabriolets, horses, and their own persons, are all coated over with the same commodity. They look, for all the world, like so many dusty millers. What a figure do the ladies appear, with the finery of which they were so proud in the morning, and the preparation of which had cost them so many anxious thoughts! Did it rain heavily?—and Derby day is always remarkable for being either very dry or very wet,—then it is difficult to say which of the evils is the greatest. A heavy shower at Epsom inspires the multitude with perfect horror. It plays fearful havoc with the ladies' dresses, and gives the whole assemblage the most crest-fallen and melancholy appearance which it were possible to imagine. See how drenched and downcast they look on their way home! One can hardly persuade himself that these are the parties he saw going to Epsom in the morning, so full of life and gaiety in their countenances and demeanour. How sad are their visages now! They are heartily sick of horse-racing; and their only wonder is that they were silly enough to leave their comfortable beds and their happy homes—

assuming them to be happy—in the morning, on such an errand as that on which they had gone. And yet after all, the chance is that they will go again next year should they be living and well, and have the necessary ways and means.*

Such is an attempted description of a Derby day at Epsom. It falls short of the actual thing itself. It is a scene which is not to be described. To form a correct idea of it, it must be witnessed.

Settling-day at Tattersall's, after the Derby, is always a day of great importance. It takes place on the Tuesday after the races. The room is crowded with sporting characters of all descriptions. With what opposite feelings,—in what different moods of mind do the parties

* I should here observe that the usual charge for a horse and gig to Epsom on the Derby day, is four guineas, being, as the sporting characters phrase it, a guinea for every horse-leg. If a coach and two horses be preferred, the charge is eight guineas; if a coach and four, sixteen. Coaches and six are out of the question; nobody thinks of hiring a vehicle with six horses. Very possibly one good reason for this, independently of the expense, is, that very few of our modern Corinthians could drive six in hand.

meet! The entire assemblage, and a motley looking assemblage it is, in more respects than one,—may be ranged into two classes: those who have won, and those who have lost. A physiognomist, of very ordinary skill in the art, might easily enough tell to which of the two classes almost every individual before him belongs. The unfortunate wight who has lost his money is dull and downcast in his looks,—of pale complexion,—hurried in his manner, and is altogether quite crestfallen. If there be an occasional smile observable in his countenance, you perceive at once it is not natural: it is of forced production. It is got up for the occasion, in the vain hope that he will so far impose on those around him, as to pass himself off for a philosopher who can firmly, and with fortitude, bear up under his adversities. But even if his forced smiles were so far successful, his abrupt and irritable manner of speaking would dispel the delusion, and reveal the depth and bitterness of his chagrin at his own folly. In the case of many, you see the self-reproaches and regrets which agitate their breasts as clearly exhibited

in the confusion and uneasiness of their manner, as if the fact that they had been losers had been written on their foreheads. Every thing around them is odious in their eyes. The very place is hateful to them: doubly so are those who have won their money, and who are now about to receive it. The Bank-of-England notes with which they meet their losses, formerly so pleasant to gaze on, are an abomination in their sight; or, if they pay with a cheque, or by bill, equally obnoxious is the "instrument of exchange." The winners, on the other hand, carry their good fortune in their faces. They are no knights of the woful countenance. See the contrast which the physiognomy of the winner presents to that of the loser! Was there ever any thing more striking? Who could believe that the human face was capable of such opposite expressions? He whose speculations have been crowned with good fortune is the very incarnation of all that is cheerful and agreeable. He smiles within himself, and he smiles on every one and every thing around him. But you perceive a special proficiency in

the art of smiling as he looks on and converses with the party at whose expense, very possibly ruin, he has filled his pockets. He talks in honied accents; he is "a bundle of sweets." He appears so remarkably obliging, and so full of the milk of human kindness, that you almost begin to doubt whether Mr. Owen's pictures of the excellence and amiability of human nature, be over-coloured in the slightest degree. You never, in other words, felt yourself before in so suitable a condition for believing in the possibility of a social millennium on earth. And then see the eagerness with which he receives the money, and the infinite delight with which he puts it into his capacious pocket-book; an eagerness and delight which are greatly heightened by the reluctance with which the losing party drags it from his coffers.

It is a painful reflection, that men can be found—and most generally found, too, in the upper and middling ranks of life—who could thus take a pleasure in preying on each other. The one's pain is the other's pleasure; the one's sorrow is the other's joy; the one's misery

is the other's happiness. The better or gambler —for the latter is the most appropriate word— coolly seeks to make his own fortune at the utter ruin of another, and that other, most probably, a friend. He wishes to be rich by reducing the other to beggary. No truly noble mind could consent to receive money on such conditions. If there were no other argument against this species of gambling than this one, it ought to put an end to the practice at once, for it is utterly destructive of all the better feelings of our nature.

When a party who has lost, does not appear at Tattersall's on settling-day, to discharge his obligations, he is spoken of as one who does not "show." If he takes flight to the Continent or some other place, he is called a Levanter.

The same term is made use of on the Stock Exchange to characterise those who are unable or unwilling to pay the amount of their losses. I believe the term owes its origin to the circumstance of some persons of distinction at a former period, who quitted the country to

escape from their creditors, having sought a place of refuge in the Levant.

On settling-day in Tattersall's, there are occasionally violent disputes between the winning and the losing parties. The latter, as may well be supposed, are always in that angry mood of mind which predisposes the party to quarrel with his fortunate opponent. If there be room for a quibble,—any pretext for the non-payment of the money lost, it is seized on with avidity, and urged with the utmost pertinacity. Violent altercations frequently ensue, and acquire such a height as almost to frighten from their propriety the more strict and quietly disposed of the sporting characters present. In several memorable cases of late years, these violent altercations have ended in blows. Who does not remember the celebrated squabble five or six years ago, between an M.P. and another sporting character, ending in an assault committed by one of the *gentlemen* on the person of the other.

Sad disappointments are often experienced at Tattersall's on settling-day. Only fancy

the circumstance of the party who has lost perhaps two or three thousand pounds coming up to the person who had won the money of him, and with a lugubrious countenance, and the expression of as many regrets as there were pounds in the amount lost, informing him that he is unable to pay the money now, but, very possibly hopes to be able to do so at some future unmentioned and unmentionable period. How deep must be the disappointment, how bitter the mortification to one who had been fondly flattering himself that he had only to open his hand to receive some thousands, when he finds that not one farthing is forthcoming. This is an every-day occurrence. Among the Turfites there is always a large proportion of desperate characters—men who are as destitute of money as they are of morals; and who bet to the amount of thousands, when they have not a sixpence in the world. But common as such cases are, perhaps there is no authenticated instance of the kind on record, which can be compared to that in which a celebrated sporting character, whose name I need not mention,

was, a few years since, the unfortunate, though he had previous to the settling-day imagined himself to be the fortunate party. His winnings amounted to little short of 3,000*l.* and he only received 20*l.* out of the whole. About the same period—I am not indeed sure whether it was not at the same races—another sporting character of great celebrity on the Turf, won 28,000*l.* from various hands; and yet he only recovered 2,500*l.*

The "betting" at Tattersall's has of late years been practically reduced to a sort of science by the more experienced Turfites. Such persons, by carefully attending to what are called "the odds" from the period at which horses begin to be entered for any particular race, until that race "comes off," might make a limited certain gain, varying in amount according to circumstances, were they to confine their betting to the taking advantage of those odds.

This, however, they seldom do; they usually suffer themselves to be seduced into hazardous speculations to a large amount, and conse-

quently often, in that way, lose more than they gain in the other.

The subject of betting is very complicated. I am afraid I shall have some difficulty in making it intelligible to those who have paid no previous attention to it. This, at all events, was the case with myself. I shall try to make the matter as plain as possible. After the close of one particular set of races, say the Epsom, the Ascot, the Doncaster, or any other you choose, horses begin to be entered for the corresponding races of the following year. I shall suppose, for the sake of simplifying the thing as much as possible, that the Derby has just been run for, and that the "settling" of the following Tuesday, is over. A certain number of colts are entered for the Derby of next year. One of these, either in consequence of some great racing feat which he has already achieved; or his particular breed; his fine appearance; or some other cause, becomes the greatest or first favourite. Another horse from the same or some other cause becomes the second favourite; and so on with the rious other horses

that are entered for the race. Betting begins to take place on the result of next year's Derby. Eight to one is freely accepted against the first horse; ten to one against the second; fifteen to one against the third; and twenty-five to one against the fourth, and so on.

Possibly, by the arrival of the Derby day, the first horse may have risen so much in public favour, as that the odds against him have dropped down from eight to one, to five to one; or it may be that something has transpired to his prejudice, which will cause the betters to venture twelve to one against him.

The second, third, or fourth horses may either rise or fall in public estimation in the same way. The betting in the case of any particular horse may thus be very different, either for or against, at any one period compared with what it is at another. The alterations which thus take place in the supposed relative chances which the various horses have of winning, are called "the odds," before alluded to. Generally speaking, experienced Turfites bet, in some

shape or other, on all the horses in the field. But, perhaps, I ought, instead of attempting an explanation of the mysteries of betting in my own language, to quote a passage on the subject which is given by Nimrod, a gentleman acknowledged on all hands to be exceedingly conversant with all matters appertaining to the Turf.

"The first object," says that pleasant writer, "of the betting man, is to purchase cheaply and to sell dearly, and next, to secure himself by hedging, so that he cannot lose if he do not win. This, however, it is evident, will not satisfy him, and he seeks for an opportunity of making himself a winner, without the chance of being a loser; which is done by what is called betting round. For example, if twenty horses start in a race, *A* bets 10 to 1 against each, he must win 9, as he receives 19 and only pays 10; namely, 10 to 1 to the winning horse. This, of course, can be rarely done, because it might not occur in a hundred years that all the horses were at such equal odds. Nevertheless, it is quite evident, that if, when a certain number of

horses start, *A* bets against all, taking care that he does not bet a higher sum against any one horse that may win than would be covered by his winnings by the others which lose, he must win. Let us then suppose *A* beginning to make his Derby book at the commencement of the new year. *B* bets him (about the usual odds) 20 to 1 against an outsider,* which *A* takes in hundreds; viz., 2000 to 100. The outsider improves, he comes out in the spring and wins a race, and the odds drop to 10 to 1. *A* bets 1000 to 100, and *against* him. He is now on velvet: he cannot lose and may win 1000. In fact, he has 1000*l.* in hand to play with, which the alteration of the odds has given him.

"But mark, he is only playing with it, he may never pocket it, so he acts thus. The outsider, we will call him Repealer, comes out again, wins another race, and the odds are only 5 to 1 against him. *A* bets 500 to 100 against him, and let us now see how he stands:—

* A horse that is considered to have scarcely a chance of winning the prize.

If Repealer wins, *A* receives from *B*		£2000
He pays to *C* . . .	£1000	
Ditto to *D* . . .	500	
		1500
Balance in *A*'s favor by Repealer winning,		500
If Repealer loses, *A* receives from *C* .		100
Ditto from *D* .		100
		200
A pays *B* £100 . . . Deduct		100
Balance in *A*'s favour by Repealer losing,		£100

"But is there *no* contingency here? Yes, the colt might have died before *A* had hedged, and then he must have paid his 100*l.*; but, on the other hand, he would have been out of the field, which might have been worth all the money to him in his deeper speculations on other horses. But let us suppose our colt to have remained at the original odds, viz., 20 to 1. In that case *A* must have betted 2000 to 100

against him, and then no harm would have arisen.

"In what is called making a book on a race, it is evident that the better must be early in the market, taking and betting the odds for and against each horse; for backing a favourite to run is not his system. His chief object is to take long odds against such horses as he fancies, and then await the turn of the market, when he sells dearly what he has purchased cheaply. For example, how often does it happen that 12 to 1 is the betting against a horse two months before his race, and before he starts it is only 4 to 1? If the better has 1200 to 100 against him, and then bets 400 to 100 the other way, he risks nothing, but has a chance to win 800*l.* It is by this system of betting that it often becomes a matter of indifference to a man which horse wins, his money being so divided amongst them all. In fact, what is called an outsider is often the best winner for him, as in that case he pockets all the bets he has made against those horses which *gentlemen and their friends have fancied.*"

This extract from "Nimrod" will let the uninitiated reader in some measure into the secret of betting on the result of horse-races; but the betting among experienced Turfites is usually much more complicated and extensive in its ramifications than could be supposed from the above explanatory observations. It is, indeed, so complicated that no description could convey a correct idea of it. To understand or master its details thoroughly, it would be necessary that the party should serve, if I may so speak, an apprenticeship of some length in Tattersall's and the ring.

Prior to betting heavily, it is of course customary to pay every possible attention to the condition of the various horses entered for the race; and none but a Turfite can have any conception of the assiduous attention with which every movement of a favourite horse is watched from the time he is nominated for the race until that race comes off. Persons who have access to the stable are often bribed with large sums, by parties who are likely to be affected to some extent by the way in which he runs, to

furnish such parties with all the information they can respecting his health, his appearance, the manner in which he eats his meat, and so forth. Not half so intense is the general interest felt in a popular sovereign, when that sovereign is supposed to be in a dangerous state, as is the interest felt by a Turfite in the condition of a favourite horse, when the animal is supposed to be, or actually is unwell. Regular bulletins of the state of his health, duly attested by the signature of the veterinary surgeon in attendance, are forwarded by the proprietor to such persons as he is desirous should be acquainted with the real state of matters. How such a horse takes his medicine,—how he feels on the following day,—how he looks,—how he eats, drinks, or walks, are matters which are all most scrupulously attended to, and are talked over with the greatest seriousness by those who have betted heavily in his favour. It is unnecessary to add, that the greatest care is exercised in the treatment of the horse by the party appointed to train him up for the great field-day. The animal is literally nursed by his trainer. His

meals are regulated with the most scrupulous care, lest he should either not get enough, or too much. Then he receives a certain amount of exercise, that amount being at all times regulated by the varied circumstances which may occur. In fine, not more solicitously or assiduously is the delicate member of an aristocratic family, attended to by the nurse appointed to wait on the party, than is the favourite race-horse by his trainer.

It is generally by a knowledge of how the various favourite horses are "doing" that the Turfites regulate their betting. They carefully weigh all the circumstances for and against the various steeds, and then bet in favour of the horse or horses that appear to them the most likely to win.

The less experienced votaries of the Turf in most cases regulate their movements by those of the parties who are familiarly, though erroneously, characterised by the epithet of "knowing ones."* They back particular horses

"A mistake prevails," says a gentleman who is intimately conversant with the Turf, "among the uninitiated with respect to

against the field,—that is to say, all the other animals entered to run, merely because they see

the term 'knowing ones.' For instance,—should the favourite get beaten for the Derby, the universal cry is, 'the knowing ones are done,' whereas it is precisely the reverse,—they would have been done had he won. It is the 'public,' that is, the backers of favourites, who in this respect, are honored with the title of knowing ones. The really knowing man is one who 'bets round,' in other words, 'makes a book' on the race. His system is to lay out a definite sum against all the horses in the betting, and the more the better. Should he be lucky enough to 'get round,' and at an average of 20 to 1 against 25 horses, he must win, and this is very frequently the case. To make it clear that the favourite is a bad horse for the knowing ones, we will suppose that a race is about to be run—that ten horses are in the betting, and that *W. B.* has made a 1000*l.* book on the following terms. Specifying the horses by the first ten letters in the alphabet, he will stand thus at the commencement of the race —

1000 to 500	(2 to 1)	against	*A*
1000 to 333	(about 3 to 1)	against	*B*
1000 to 250	(4 to 1)	against	*C*
1000 to 167	(about 6 to 1)	against	*D*
1000 to 125	(8 to 1)	against	*E*
1000 to 100	(10 to 1)	against	*F*
1000 to 83	(about 12 to 1)	against	*G*
1000 to 70	(about 14 to 1)	against	*H*
1000 to 50	(20 to 1)	against	*I*
1000 to 40	(25 to 1)	against	*J*

"Now, it is obvious that the favourite, *A.*, is the worst horse

Turfites of distinguished reputation doing the same. This is often found to be "an egregious error," as will be made sufficiently clear in another part of the chapter.

With the mass of adventurers on the result of any particular race, who know nothing of Tattersall's otherwise than by name, the standard by which they regulate their bettings is the reports in the public journals as to which of the horses are the favourite. They usually bet with one another in conformity with the state of the odds at Tattersall's, as given in the newspapers, without possessing the slightest knowledge as to what particular person backs this horse or the other horse.

A considerable number of persons, again, reserve their bettings until they are actually on

in the race for *W. B.*; and should it win, he clears, after paying the 1000*l.*, only 218*l.* (this sum is made by casting up the amounts won on the others—minus the 1000*l.* he has paid), whereas, should the outsider, *J.*, win, he nets 678*l.* after paying the 1000*l.* to the backers of the successful horse. Supposing that more than the ten ran, and that one of those not mentioned came in first, *W. B.* would then win every one of his bets,—the horses not mentioned being technically termed his 'field.'"

the race-course, and have seen the various horses about to start for the prize. Every one fancies he is a judge of horse-flesh, and that he can single out the fleetest horse. And as it happens that most of those around him are of an opinion different from his, there is seldom any difficulty in finding a party to bet in the opposite way. A much larger amount of betting takes place in the field than most persons are aware of. I have heard of a case in which, a few seconds before the horses started, a gambling Whitechapel butcher, having accidentally met a nobleman with whom, through an extensive intercourse with him in matters pertaining to the Turf, he was on terms of as great familiarity as he ever was with any fellow-slaughterer of the horned creation,—I have heard of this Whitechapel butcher accosting his noble friend, with "Ah, is that you! I'll lay you 2000*l.* to 800*l.* you don't name the winner."

"Done," said his lordship. "Fearnought!"

"Will you double the money?"

"I don't mind though I do."

"Will you take a third 2000*l.* to 800*l.*?"

"Accepted."

"Go it again for the same amount?"

"No; the horses are off."

I do not mean to say that there are many such extensive transactions as this on the Turf, after the horses are in the field. There are but comparatively few persons whose finances would admit of such deep play. But I know that an immense number of such transactions, though to a less amount, take place on the race-courses at Epsom, Ascot, Doncaster, and other places. Probably I do not over estimate the extent of such transactions, when I suppose them to be at Epsom, on the Derby day, little short of 100,000*l.*

The result of a race is often at variance with appearances at starting. Horses which for the first eighty or a hundred yards would be deemed likely to be the last in coming in, are occasionally found to be the winners; while others, which for the same or even a greater distance are so far a-head of the others as to create a universal impression that they will carry off the prize, are found to be among the last to

reach the winning point. Only fancy, in such a case, how sudden must be the transition from despair to hope—from sorrow to joy, which the minds of those whose money is staked on the horses first referred to, must undergo; and how suddenly on the other hand, the hopes and joys of those who have betted in favour of the last mentioned steeds, must give place to despair and regret. In the latter case the cup of good fortune is raised to the lips merely to tantalize the party; for it is in a moment dashed on the ground: in the former case the party drinks it out before he is well aware of its being presented to him. It is interesting to think how equally matched, all circumstances considered, the various horses that enter the field usually are. Even in the case of the Queen's Plate races at Newmarket, where the course is four miles, and there are often ten or twelve horses contesting the prize, there will not be a distance of more than thirty or forty yards between the first and last on reaching the end of the course Two or three of the best horses are frequently so equally matched, that after running the dis-

tance already mentioned, the judges have difficulty in awarding the prize. What is still more surprising than the fact of their being abreast on reaching the end of the course, is the circumstance of its often being a neck and neck race between two or more horses from the moment of starting until they have got to the end of the distance. The most extraordinary instance of equal running, of which I ever remember to have heard, occurred a few years ago at one of our leading county races. Three heats or races were run at certain intervals of time in one day, without the judge being able to decide which of the two best horses were entitled to the prize.

Just before entering the race-course the horses that are about to run are exercised in a sort of canter. Even at this late hour, innumerable bets are laid on the event about to be decided. Deep betting, however, as in the case of the betting that takes place when the animals are first exhibited, is seldom very general, being chiefly limited to working-men, shopkeepers, and others. The horses having thus "shown

off" in a small way immediately before entering the course, every one naturally conceives himself entitled to form his opinion as to which animal is or is not to win the prize; and conceiving this, he concludes, — and no one can question his perfect right to do so—that in this free country he, as well as others, may back his opinion by a sovereign, or crown, or other sum, according to his circumstances. There is one advantage which those who thus bet at the last moment, and who lose their money, have over those who have betted at an earlier period, and that is, that they are spared the suspense, the alternate hopes and fears, according as the aspect which rumours, and inventions, and actual facts assume, relative to the leading horse,—which are so largely experienced by those who had staked their money at a previous period.

The amount of money which changes hands immediately after the conclusion of the leading races is immensely great. I have heard it stated by one of the leading sportsmen of the present day, that at least 1,000,000*l.* changes

hands by the result of the Derby race at Epsom. Surely there must be an exaggeration here. If there were only half that sum, which I am convinced there is, it would be a very large amount. In some cases particular individuals bet to the extent of 20,000*l.*, 30,000*l.*, and even 40,000*l.* on a single event. In 1826, Lord Kennedy, one of the most celebrated Turfites of the present day, bet 30,000*l.* to 1000*l.* against a horse called Crusader. In the same year, another sporting character bet 20,000*l.* against General, which was the favourite horse, and won it, but it was commonly believed there was foul play. Mr. Ridsdale, the distinguished Yorkshire sportsman, won at the Derby race of 1832, the sum of 40,000*l.* by backing St. Giles, which was his own horse, exclusive of 2775*l.* in stakes. This was certainly good work for one day.

It is a curious fact, that a horse which easily beat all the other competitors for a particular prize, will sometimes, when running a race which takes place a few months afterwards, completely break down, and allow himself to be

distanced by other horses which were not supposed to have even the remotest chance with him. Instances have repeatedly occurred in which the winner of the St. Leger, has a few months afterwards, been beat by the very same animals which he had left far behind him in the first instance. This is accounted for from the fact that some horses acquit themselves better on a soft than on a hard course; while others run better on hard than on soft ground. Other horses again may be unequalled at running on a level ground; while anything in the shape of an ascent proves fatal to their successful racing. When a horse that won the last St. Leger, is beat at the following Derby, or that won the Derby, and is beat at the next St. Leger, the losses as hinted in a previous part of the chapter, are always enormous; such horse, provided nothing has previously transpired to his prejudice, either through bad health, or otherwise, being always backed to a very large amount. It is unnecessary to say that the market value of such a horse experiences an immediate and serious fall. There have been instances in

which horses, after winning some of the leading prizes, would have brought from 3500*l.* to 4000*l.* which would not fetch 300*l.* after being beat at the next great race. At the Epsom races of 1834, one horse, whose name I do not remember, was so great a favourite that 2500*l.* was offered and refused for him. He ran so badly, that in a few months afterwards the proprietor gladly sold him for 65*l.* Horses, on the other hand, that, contrary to the general expectation win some leading prize, rise as suddenly and to a proportionate extent in value. Fleur de Lis, for instance, was sold to Sir Mathew Ridley, soon after her appearance in 1825, for 100*l.*, but having distinguished herself by winning a number of prizes in the course of the next two years, she was then purchased by George the Fourth for 1500 guineas.

Horses of great reputation on the Turf always bring large sums. From 2500*l.* to 3500*l.* is quite a common price for a first-rate horse. As high as 5000 and even 6000 guineas, has repeatedly been given. One of the Bonds, the well-known proprietors of the great gambling

house in Bennet Street, gave Mr. Beardsworth, 5000 guineas for Ludlow at the Doncaster races of 1832. Some years ago, the Duke of Cleveland gave 12,000*l.* for four horses.

So great is the supposed inequality of the horses that are entered to contest the leading prizes, that it is quite common to bet 50 or 60 to 1, against a particular horse. In several cases 100 to 1, have been bet that a certain horse would not win. The greatest disproportion I have heard of in the betting on any horse, was in the case of one which ran for the Derby some years ago, when 200 to 1 was bet against him.

While some horses never gain more than one prize, others have a continued course of good luck. The mare Fleur de Lis, already referred to, won ten out of eleven races. But the horse, which of all others, continued to run for the longest time, and which gained the greatest number of prizes, was Dr. Syntax. This horse continued on the Turf ten consecutive years, and ran in the course of that period no fewer than forty-nine times. Out of this number of

contests, Dr. Syntax won the prize in twenty-six instances. Among the prizes thus gained were twenty gold cups.

There are many of the country races at which horses of all ages, and carrying all weights, are allowed to run; but at the Doncaster, Epsom, and other leading races, the horses must be of the same age and carry the same weight.* In the Derby, the competitors must be three-year-olds. Either colts or fillies of this age may run for the Derby; but for the Oaks none but fillies are allowed to start. The weight carried by the colts, in the Derby contest, is eight stone seven pounds; that carried by the fillies is eight stone two pounds. In the case of the Oaks, the age of the fillies is also three years, and the weight eight stone four pounds. But it is unnecessary to enter in detail into statements of this kind, every place having its own rules and

* Where the horses are equally matched, the carrying one or two pounds additional weight would be decisive of the race. Some years ago, a horse that won the race easily when carrying the same weight as the other competitors, lost it when the proprietor agreed that three pounds should be added to the weight.

regulations in such matters. To bring themselves within the proper weight, the jockeys are often obliged to go through a starvation allowance for a week or two previous to the day of the races. I have heard of one, who by this means reduced his weight to the extent of seven pounds.

But the hope of gaining the prize is a sufficiently powerful inducement to submit to the privation of their usual meals; for it is the invariable practice to present the rider of the successful horse with a handsome douceur. In the case of the leading races, it is seldom less than 200*l.* or 300*l.* The highest reward ever known to be given to a jockey for his good riding was 1000*l.* This handsome gift was made to James Robinson, a Scotchman, by his master, also a Scotchman, for riding Matilda, when that celebrated mare won the St. Leger in 1827.

In the case of the Derby, the St. Leger, and the other principal races, the horses intending to contest the prize must be nominated when they are only one year old. They may be named

either at London or Newmarket. The last day of the July Newmarket races, is the last day for the nomination of competitors for the prizes in question.

All disputes which arise about matters directly appertaining to the Turf, must be referred to the decision of the stewards of the Jockey Club. This is the only recognised tribunal in such matters. Its decision is final: there is no appeal from it. The Jockey Club consists of upwards of sixty noblemen and gentlemen of more or less standing in the sporting world. The stewards are three in number. One retires every year to make way for another, the retiring steward having the right to name his successor.

In a week or so after a great race has been run, the winning horse is honoured with the appearance of his portrait and an account of his pedigree in "Bell's Life in London." In a month or two afterwards the same mark of distinction will be conferred on him, in a different style of engraving, by the Old and New Sporting Magazines. "Bell's Life in London," I may here obsreve, is the only recognised news-

paper organ of the Turf. Which of the two magazines is the leading monthly organ, is a point which I cannot determine. Each maintains that it is more approved and countenanced by the most distinguished men on the Turf, than the other. The rivalry between the two is very great, and there is reason to believe that both are sufferers by the competition. Twenty years ago, the Old Sporting Magazine was an excellent property, but it has been greatly lessened in value by the conjoint operation of unskilful management some years since, and the spirit and vigour with which it has been opposed by its young rival.

The number of horses that run for the prizes, whether at Epsom, Ascot, Doncaster, or any other place, varies according to circumstances; but it will be found as a general rule, that the number is proportioned to the comparative interest which the races excite. The greatest number ever known to contest the Derby at Epsom, was twenty-five. This was some years ago, but I do not now remember the particular year. Upwards of twenty horses have repeat-

edly run for the St. Leger at Doncaster. The greatest number that ever took the field at the latter place, was thirty. This was in 1825. Twenty-seven have started on two occasions—in 1820 and in 1826. The number of candidates for the gold cup at Ascot which usually take the field, is from four to seven.* For the smaller prizes, the number of competitors is less at all the races than for those of the first class. For the Oaks at Epsom, the number seldom exceeds fifteen, and is generally less.

The number of horses that are entered with the declared intention of contesting the prizes at the various races, is always much greater than that which actually takes the field. It is often six or seven times as great. The greatest

* The reason why the field at Ascot is so small compared with the value of the prize, is that the competing horses carry weight for age; so that moderate horses have no chance with those of the first class. It would very much increase the interest of this race if the conditions on which the Goodwood Cup is run for were introduced, which conditions make it a handicap race, an expression which implies that the weights put on the horses are in proportion to their public running. There is, however, this one departure from this rule, that horses that have never run are always weighted heavily.

number that entered for the Derby was one hundred and thirty-five. This was for the Derby of the present year. The number that ran was only twenty-three. The number that entered for the Oaks, though great, was considerably less. For the St. Leger of 1829, a period when the races were at the height of their popularity, the number of horses that entered was ninety-seven, though only nineteen took the field. For four or five years past, these races had been declining in the public favour, and the number of actual performances, if not of entries, had been correspondingly reduced; but there is a re-action in this respect this year, for the number of horses entered for the next Derby is one hundred and fifty-two. It is possible, however, that out of this large number not more than from fifteen to twenty may take the field.

There are various causes which conspire to prevent a horse which has been duly entered, from running the intended race. The nominator may die before the appointed time arrives; in which case, according to the rules which regulate all matters appertaining to the Turf,

the horse is disqualified. Or any accident may, before the day of the race arrives, befal the animal, which either entirely disables him from running, or deprives him of any reasonable chance of winning.

Another reason for withdrawing the horse may be, that the proprietor is in arrears for previous transactions on the Turf. Or the proprietor, seeing other decidedly superior horses in the field, may come to the conclusion that his one has not the slightest chance of a successful competition. Lastly, to mention no other reasons for the withdrawal of horses that have entered for a particular race, the betting on those horses may wear such an aspect as that the proprietors may, either directly or indirectly, have sufficiently powerful reasons to prevent their wishing that their horses should win, and consequently to cause them to determine on their withdrawal. This, of course, can only be where there is roguery in the matter, which it will be seen is but too often the case, when I come to speak of the tricks of the Turf.

In numerous cases, those who *fancy* themselves "knowing ones" in horse-flesh, are at fault in their calculations. Their favourite, instead of coming in first, or in other words winning the prize, is perhaps six or seven behind, which, in the language of the Turf, is called being nowhere. On the other hand, "outsiders," which, as explained in a previous part of the chapter, means horses that nobody thought of, because it was supposed they had not the remotest chance of winning, sometimes are the successful competitors. It is impossible to describe the mortification experienced by those who prided themselves on their supposed superior knowledge of horse flesh, either when the animal which was their favourite, thus falls far behind, or when a horse they looked on as not having a chance of coming in even fourth or fifth, is the winner of the race. In many cases the parties feel more acutely the exhibition thus made of their ignorance in sporting matters, than they do the loss of their money.

The Turf is on the decline. Every friend of morality, and every one who wishes well to his

fellow-creatures, will rejoice at this. What are now the leading horse-races, but gambling transactions on an extensive scale? At what time gambling was first introduced on the Turf, I have not been able to ascertain, but it must have been at least nearly three centuries ago; it is distinctly mentioned as being to a certain extent prevalent in the reign of Elizabeth. In that reign George Earl of Cumberland, as is well known, almost ruined himself by his gambling propensities on the Turf. Towards the close of the seventeenth century, gambling at horse-races appears to have become so general, that Burton, the author of the "Anatomy of Melancholy," who flourished at that time, emphatically though quaintly said, "that many gentlemen by means of race-horses, *galloped* out of their fortunes." What would Burton have thought if he had foreseen the extent to which the vice of gambling on the Turf is carried in our day? Thousands are yearly ruined by it.

There is a numerous gang of sharpers and black-legs, who make the plunder of simple-

tons who bet on horse-racing, a part of their daily schemes and daily roguery. Their plans are secret, but they are deeply laid and are carried out with a skill and artfulness which render their success almost a matter of moral certainty. And even where they are detected, it is not, unhappily, until they have fleeced their victims. What villanies have of late been brought to light, which have been practised at our leading horse-races? But in no instance have they been discovered in sufficient time to save the unsuspecting simpletons whose money was at stake. And what care the unprincipled "legs" for exposure, when it comes not until after they have pocketed the money of their victims? Nothing at all; for they have no character to lose. And they know the law cannot reach them. Who does not remember the disgraceful transactions which took place at the Doncaster races of 1832? And are not certain transactions of the most unprincipled kind, which occurred at a celebrated race a few months ago, and by which thousands have been ruined,—still the subject of animated and

indignant remark in all the sporting circles? The affair of the horse Ludlow, is still fresh in the recollection of all patrons of the Turf; and that of Harkaway at a very recent race, is not likely to cease to be spoken about for some time to come. Is it not beyond all question, that horses, which otherwise would have won, are often prevented from winning by the most consummate roguery? In some cases they are drugged so as to make them sick; in others the jockeys are bribed to ride them in such a way as to prevent their coming in first. A very common expedient resorted to by the "leg" fraternity, when they have made their arrangements to their entire satisfaction beforehand, is to withdraw the horse which was the greatest favourite, by either purchasing him from the proprietor or pretending to have purchased him. In fact there is no end to the tricks of the Turf. The ramifications of the roguery practised by the mendacious gamblers who are so largely mixed up with all Turf transactions, are so varied and extensive, that no calculation or foresight can guard against their effects. So cun-

ningly and skilfully are their schemes for plundering her Majesty's subjects laid, that they often, with the view of gulling the public, bet to a certain extent in favour of the favourite horse, though they know he will lose. A little loss in this way is amply made up by secretly betting to a large amount the other way; or by some other private arrangement made among themselves. Another favourite expedient on the race-course is to invent all sorts of rumours respecting different horses,—rumours relative to the probability or otherwise of particular animals running; and thus raising the odds, or causing them to fall in particular cases, according as their own interests are affected. Scarcely less notorious for the invention of false rumours on the part of a gang of black legs, is the race-course, than is the Stock Exchange itself. With regard again to the running of favourite horses, it is now so common a practice for the parties interested to manage matters in such a way as that they shall not win,—that it has of late become customary with the recently initiated, before betting for or

against any favourite horse, to do every thing he can to ascertain whether or not it really be meant or intended by the proprietor that the horse shall win.

The public, who know little or nothing of the tricks of the Turf, never contemplate the possibility of any person entering a favourite horse, far less of his starting him for the race, without being most desirous that he should win; and, consequently, are victimized without perhaps ever suspecting that there was aught else than perfect fairness in the matter. It is well known that many hundreds of pounds have been given to proprietors of favourite horses, to bribe them not to win the race; and it is equally well known that the jockeys destined to ride such horses, have when not directly bribed by the "legs" to lose the race, often received through the proprietors two or three hundred pounds for riding in such a way as to cause the horse to make a respectable appearance on the race-course, and thus lull suspicion of any treachery without winning the prize.

When I mention that a number of Jewish

black-legs,—for the Turf swarms with rogues of the Hebrew persuasion,—have severally, perhaps, betted from 10,000*l.* to 15,000*l.* that a particular horse shall not win, and when I add, that these are all leagued together for the purpose of plundering simpletons of their money, it will at once be seen to be natural that they should unite together, through the medium of one of their number, in offering the proprietor of a horse, where that proprietor is supposed to be accessible to bribery, such a sum as will cause him to guarantee that the horse shall not win the race.

In innumerable cases, in which the proprietors were men of too much honour and honesty to be parties to any such fraud, the leading men among the "leg" fraternity have, through the intervention of some person on whom they could depend, attempted to bribe the individual entrusted with the training of the particular horse, to give him a particular pill the night before the race, so as to make him sick; and when this has failed, the inducement of some hundred pounds not to win, has been held out to

the jockey booked to ride the animal. And where all efforts of the kind have failed, a sum twice the value of the horse has repeatedly been offered for him immediately before the races.

The late Mr. Mostyn was offered the unprecedented sum of seven thousand guineas, a few years since, for a horse of his which was the favourite for the St. Leger; but knowing that the offer was made for the purpose of enabling the parties to practise a fraud on the public, he, like an honourable man, scorned to accept it, though the probability was he would have taken a third of the sum after the races were over. Had the swindling brotherhood got the horse, they would of course have withdrawn him from the field,—all the parties who had betted that he would win, being in that case equally losers as if he had contested the prize but been unsuccessful.

The trickery which is practised on the Turf may be inferred from the character of the persons who most largely patronize it. Who are these? Notoriously the leading proprietors of gambling-houses in London, and the princi-

pal frequenters of those houses. Who ever heard of a race of any note, without seeing Crockford standing on the course, with his hands in his pockets, and looking like one whose mind is occupied with some abstruse calculations as to the way in which the impending "events" are likely to come off? And see how the trio of Bonds, the next greatest gambling-house proprietors in the metropolis, dash about in their splendid equipages. As to gambling noblemen and gentlemen: why there is not one of any notoriety in our London hells, that is not equally well known on the Turf. I could here run over in dozens the names of dukes, of marquises, of earls, and of noblemen and gentlemen of every rank, professed devotees of gambling at the hazard-tables of the hells in town, who are equally notorious for their patronage of the Turf. And how many of these are there, who are bankrupt in fortune as well as character?

Then there are the false notions of honour that prevail on the Turf. Such are these notions, that Turfites feel bound to pay, provided they

can at all raise the amount, any losses they may incur by betting, even though their tradesmen and families should not only be suffering the greatest privations in consequence of the non-payment of the amount due to them, but should be brought to the verge of ruin on that account. How many poor tradesmen suffered, and how many of themselves or their successors still suffer, from the non-payment by the late Duke of York, of the debts he contracted with them! And yet he always made a point of paying the losses he sustained on the Turf. It was the same in the case of his brother, George the Fourth, when Prince of Wales; and it is the same with numbers of noblemen whose names might be mentioned. Such is the morality which obtains on the Turf! Such are the notions of honor that are entertained by its votaries!

The Turf, then, is a most prolific source of social evil. I am convinced it would be impossible to estimate the amount of mischief it has done to morals, to families, and to society. It first destroys all the better feelings of one's nature, and then destroys one's fortune. Could

all those that are still alive who have been ruined by the Turf, be brought into one place, what a vast and wretched assemblage of human beings would they present! The victims of the Turf! Why their name is legion!

It is deeply to be regretted that when the results of betting on horse-races are so disastrous, those races should be specially patronised by the Queen. Of course, the blame does not attach to her. The subject is one which, in all probability, has never been brought under her consideration. She subscribes to the Ascot Races, and patronises those races by her presence, because her predecessors have done the same before her. But it is to be regretted that there should not be those around her throne, who would point out to her the frightful evils which are necessarily associated with the Turf, and suggest to her that she ought not to become the patroness either by her purse or her presence—especially not by both—of a pastime which is productive of so much immorality and of so much misery to individuals and families. I am sure, that were a Sovereign possessed of

such amiable feelings as is Victoria, and who is so exceedingly anxious to promote the cause of morals, and to increase the happiness of mankind,—only aware of the deplorable and destructive consequences of horse-racing, she would at once withdraw her patronage from that pastime.

CHAPTER IV.

DOWNING STREET.

Its situation and appearance—The Premier's Office; Lord Melbourne, the Duke of Wellington, and Earl Grey—Chancellor of the Exchequer's Office; Mr. Spring Rice, Sir Robert Peel, and Lord Althorp—The Colonial Office and Lord Glenelg—The Foreign Office and Lord Palmerston—Ludicrous interviews with Ministers—Economy in Downing Street.

DOWNING STREET! What subject could be so interesting? What street, amidst the thousands of streets in this metropolis, possesses a tithe of the importance which attaches to it? Most momentous to the British empire, and not to it only, but to the whole civilized world, are the daily doings in Downing Street. The well-being of the human race is often more or less affected

by the decisions which are come to there. But of this, more anon.

Where is Downing Street? in what part of London is it situated? the country reader will inquire. So will the visiter to the metropolis, whose stay is limited, and who is anxious to see every locality possessed of particular interest. Downing Street is situated in the heart of London. It is about a quarter of a mile south of Charing Cross, and about an equal distance north of Westminster Abbey, the courts of law, and the houses of Parliament. It is on the right hand, at the furthest end of Whitehall, just as you enter Parliament Street. Every one fancies that as it is the place where the leading government offices are situated, it must be a very imposing street; a place which will dazzle the eye by its splendour. He finds himself sadly mistaken when it meets his gaze. He can hardly persuade himself that he has been directed to the right place. He sees clearly enough, from a little board on the corner-house, that this is *a* Downing Street; but he will not be convinced that it is *the*

Downing Street. It is so, nevertheless. And a miserable looking place it assuredly is for the most important business of the country to be transacted in. The street is short and for the most part narrow. Its length, I should think does not exceed fifty yards, and its breadth, with the exception of a small space at the further end, which has the appearance of a Lilliputian square, cannot, I should fancy, be more than eight or nine yards. The first house on the right hand side, on entering the street, is a very handsome building: it is the place in which the Privy Council hold their deliberations. But see the contrast which the houses on the opposite or left-hand side exhibit to it. The corner one is a public house, or as the sign-board outside characterizes it, a "wine vaults." The next eight houses are chiefly tenanted by people who live by letting out lodgings; furnished or unfurnished, as the case may be. And what dingy smoked-looking buildings do they appear! Quite in keeping with their appearance in this respect, is their dilapidated aspect. They are evidently of great

antiquity, and look so very ruinous, that the wonder is how any one can sleep in them, or cross their threshold without being apprehensive of their falling about his ears before he awakes, or before he gets outside again. The panes of glass in many of the windows are shattered; in some they have been so tinkered or patched, that it would require a little time and no small measure of discernment, to say which is the fragment that still remains, if any do remain, of the original pane. A slip of paper in some instances is substituted for glass; in other cases a piece of old clothes is forced into some perforation in the panes, for the purpose of keeping out the wind and the rain. Then witness the parties who are to be seen at the windows. There are lots of children with dirty faces, and very indifferent clothes; and the grown-up personages, in some cases, though not in all, are but little better. Would any one believe it, that nearly opposite the last of these nine houses is the official residence of the Prime Minister! If Lord Melbourne be fond of such amusement, he has only to look any day out of

his windows, to see little unwashed cherubs in abundance, on the opposite side.

The public house in the corner is one with which many curious circumstances are associated. It is the favourite place of resort of aristocratic coachmen and other male servants in the habit of attending on the great ones of the earth. And most amusing is it to see them there in the evening, smoking their pipes and swilling their porter, and to hear the familiar terms in which they speak of their noble masters. No one ever yet heard any of these Jehus, grooms, and so forth, adventure a difference of opinion from their masters on political questions; but nothing could exceed the terms of familiarity in which they speak of them. They are "old boys," "jolly old fellows," "rum 'uns," "good 'uns," "chaps," and so on.

But it is due to the liveried servants of the aristocracy, who patronise the wine-vaults in the corner of Downing Street, to say, that while they themselves speak in terms of the greatest familiarity—a familiarity verging on ridicule—of their masters, they will not tolerate any one

else, were he to attempt to do so. The coachee, who but a moment before was speaking of his noble master, Lord So-and-So, as an "old buffer," or a "reg'lar rum 'un," will not hesitate an instant to knock down the mechanic or other person who ventures to speak disrespectfully of him. More than this, there is not a jarvey or lacquey among them that will not resent with spirit any attack which may be made upon the nobility, as a class, by any Radical or other person, who has a dislike to the aristocracy. Earl Grey once declared his determination to stand by his order: if he wishes for allies in the business, he will find them in abundance in the public-house at the corner of the street in which, when Prime Minister, he resided for several years. Though not *of* the order, these persons are most devotedly attached *to* the order.

Every day—almost indeed every hour—pots of foaming heavy wet are to be seen, being carried up from the corner house, to the various offices in Downing Street. Who could witness this without wondering in his own mind for whom

are these copious draughts of Whitbread and Co's. Entire intended. Ill-natured people, disposed to have their joke, would mention the names of persons high in office. I think I may safely venture to say, that this heavy wet is invariably intercepted by the porters in the halls of the different offices, when the tour it makes is extended beyond the limits of the nine houses I have already attended to.

Many are the hundreds of letters; in some cases stating grievances, real or imaginary, and imploring redress; in others, applying for situations,—which have been addressed to the different members of the government from the parlour, aye, and from the tap-room, too, of the corner public-house. The most curious instance of this kind which has come to my knowledge, was that of a person who daily, from this wine-vaults, for several months, besieged the Duke of Wellington, when he was in office in 1829, with applications for some situation under government. The Duke's secretary became quite tired of returning answers to the applicant's epistles, and the Duke himself of hearing

the fact stated every day, that a fresh letter had been received. The party was peremptorily requested to desist from troubling the Duke with fruitless applications: still he persevered. At length the Duke, wearied, like the man in the Evangelists, with the importunity of his correspondent, took up his letter and went with it himself into the Colonial Office, when, handing it to the Colonial Secretary, he begged the latter to give the party applying some inferior appointment in the colonies, in order that he might be sent out of the country, and by that means spare him (the Duke) any further persecution. It was done as the Duke desired, and the party still, for anything I know to the contrary, holds the same government situation in one of our colonies.*

The first house on the right-hand side of

* No more colonial nor other appointments will be got in consequence of any letters written from the public-house at the corner of Downing-street; for while these sheets are passing through the press, that house, and the other eight houses already alluded to, are ordered to be taken down. The wonder is, how such a nuisance as these houses have for years been, should have been tolerated so long.

Downing Street, after passing the Privy Council room and a passage which leads into St. James's Park, is the official residence and offices of the PRIME MINISTER. It has a very plain, unimposing appearance outside. The windows are small, and the height is only three stories.

But, though it has but a humble unattractive aspect externally, it is very comfortable inside, being abundantly and splendidly furnished, while the apartments, if not remarkable for their spaciousness, are laid out with much judgment. The rooms are about sixty in number, and extend as far back as the park. The house is celebrated for possessing one thing, which, let philosophers laugh at it as they please, is very indispensable to human happiness: I allude to its having what is generally allowed to be the finest kitchen in the world. The only two things requisite to extract enjoyment from the kitchen, is to have a good cook, and plenty of materials to afford sufficient scope for that cook's culinary skill. The latter, namely, the materials are, I need hardly say, never wanting in a

prime minister's house, and the other, viz., a good cook, is an article which may also be easily procured, if persons will but pay a proper price and go to the proper market. I make this remark by way of preface to the statement of two facts: first, that the Duke of Wellington, who, though by no means an epicure, yet desirous that whatever he does eat should be prepared in the best style, has always taken special care that his cook should be a man of first-rate acquirements in the culinary science; and, second, which is the point I have specially in my eye, that when he resided in this house, during the time he was at the head of the government, he had in his employ as cook, the very person, a Frenchman of course, though I forget his name, who was principal cook to Buonaparte twenty years previously.

And since thus incidentally mentioning the name of the Duke of Wellington, let me add, that when in power, a person more close or attentive to the duties of his office, never crossed the threshold of any of the houses in Downing Street. Declining the innumerable invitations he

was hourly receiving to dinner and other parties, in the mansions of the aristocracy, and resisting all the temptations to pleasures of other kinds, to which an individual of his station is exposed, he applied himself to the discharge of his official duties, with an assiduity, and zeal, and patience, which the most fagging attorney never exceeded, and which would have covered with blushes and confusion of face, thousands of our London clerks who are in the habit of complaining of their close confinement to the duties of their situations.

Earl Grey also lived constantly in the official residence in Downing Street, when he presided over the destinies of our empire; but though, on the whole, attentive to the duties of his office, he was not so laborious and indefatigable in the discharge of those duties as his predecessor the Duke of Wellington.

As for Lord Melbourne, again, he has never formally taken up his residence in Downing Street. He will not, to use a familiar phrase, "move a step" on any account from South Street. Why he so tenaciously clings to the

one residence, and so systematically shuns the other, is a problem the solution of which I leave to others. He is, as I hinted in a previous work,* the most light-hearted prime minister that ever presided at the helm of public affairs. I should like to see the political event, short of his ejection from office, that would give him a moment's concern. I will answer for it, that he did not lose his usual afternoon's nap on the day on which he received the intelligence of Earl Durham's resignation of the Governor-Generalship of Canada. No one ever yet perceived a thoughtful expression on his countenance, caused by the pressure of national affairs. He is still the same laughter-loving, jolly-looking person he was before his elevation to office. I will undertake to assert, that he is the most easy-minded man in the country. He takes care not to hurt himself by over-exertion in the discharge of the duties of the premiership. He has no notion of doing anything which may be left undone: it were well if he did not some-

* The Second Series of "Random Recollections of the Lords and Commons."

times leave undone the things which he ought to have done. Neither will he put himself to the trouble of doing, in his own person, what can be done by proxy. He laughs at the idea of men in office over-working themselves in the public service; and is determined, that no consideration on earth shall induce him to become a living martyr for his country, by submitting to "too much" of the drudgery of office. In conformity with this principle, he is not to be found in Downing Street more days in the week nor more hours in the day, than he can help.

Next to the official residence of the Prime Minister, are the official residence and offices of the CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER. These premises, like the house just described, though possessing no external attractiveness, are very commodious in the inside. The rooms are, for the most part, spacious and lofty. The furniture is scanty and plain. Most of the apartments into which the public are admitted when on business with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, have all the appearance of being so many libraries: and most monotonous is the

aspect of the books. They are not only for the most part uniformly bound, but they are chiefly of one size, namely, the folio size. The standard books, if books they should be called, to be found in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's official apartments, principally consist of acts of parliament, parliamentary reports, treatises on international law, and works on other heavy and uninteresting subjects. As for works of fiction, or the effusions of the muse, you might as soon expect to find lobsters on the land, as to meet with a novel or a volume of poetry within the precincts of the office of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sir Walter Scott's novels are supposed to have penetrated everywhere: it is a great mistake; they have never yet found their way to the Downing Street libraries. At all events, I have not met with any one that ever discovered them in that locality. Shakspeare has been called the poet of all times and of all countries. I do not question the justice of the remark. But, if any one will hazard the hypothesis that he is also the poet of all *places*, I will undertake to demolish the hypothesis in

a single sentence: he is not the poet of Downing Street. Byron may be popular enough everywhere else: he is unknown in the official library of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or in any of the other libraries in the same locality. I doubt, indeed, if the scraps of poetry which Mr. Spring Rice has himself occasionally contributed to periodicals,—for he does, now and then, try his hand in the metrical way,—I doubt whether any of the works containing his poetical effusions, have ever found their way across the threshold of his library departments. Of this I am certain, that if they have, it must be the result of some smuggling transaction! The entrance must have been effected clandestinely; and, even after accomplishing a location there, the situation assigned them must be some obscure, some almost unvisited corner of the place.

There are several apartments in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's office, which are used as places in which that gentleman holds his interviews with deputations. Some of them are large, some smaller; and in the selection of the room

in which Mr. Spring Rice, or any other gentleman who fills the office which he now holds, condescends to see a deputation, that functionary is guided, in most cases, by the number of persons of whom the deputation consists. Sometimes the apartment fixed on is on the ground floor; at other times it is on the floor above. Deputations are sometimes very numerous. I have been present when from twenty to twenty-five gentlemen have been honoured with an interview with Mr. Spring Rice. When the numbers are so great as this, it becomes requisite to fetch an additional supply of chairs for the parties; for it is but justice to Chancellor-of-Exchequership politeness, to say, that gentlemen, on all such occasions, are asked to take a seat. The greatest inconvenience ever suffered by deputations, on their being located in the regions of Downing Street, is before they are admitted into the presence of the minister with whom they are about to have the interview. Happy he who, on such occasions, appropriates the first chair that comes within his reach; for there is not only a marked famine of these useful articles

of household furniture, in all the rooms into which deputations are shown before being admitted to "the presence;" but the under official showing them into such apartments, not only never dreams of accommodating them with an additional number of chairs when necessary; but he does not always ask them to make use of the few that are in the place. And only fancy how unpleasant and tiresome it must be to stand, perhaps a full hour, before you are summoned into the apartment in which the minister is to receive you. In such cases I have seen members of Parliament and other gentlemen, compelled from sheer exhaustion caused by standing for some time after having walked a considerable distance, to throw all considerations of etiquette to the winds, and lean against a table, sit down on a box, or rest themselves in any other way they could.

The longest period I ever remember to have seen a deputation wait before they were admitted to the presence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was about an hour and a quarter. This was three years ago, when Mr.

O'Connell, followed by a tail of sixteen or eighteen Irish members, waited on Mr. Spring Rice, on some subject connected with river navigation,—the navigation, if I mistake not, of the Shannon, in Ireland. As nearly as I can recollect, the hour appointed for the interview was two o'clock. The deputation were "punctual as lovers to the moment sworn." Not so Mr. Spring Rice. I think it was precisely a quarter past three, making, as just stated, an hour and a quarter which the deputation had to wait, before the Chancellor of the Exchequer condescended to be visible. To be sure, he apologized for "keeping the deputation waiting so long," and assigned a reason for the delay. But before the deputation received the anxiously wished-for summons into Mr. Spring Rice's presence, they one and all evinced the most decided symptoms of impatience; not unmingled with feelings of a nature which I shall not name. Two or three were fortunate enough to lay hold of as many chairs, on their being shown into the room; and the remainder of the deputation, *standing* on their notions of eti-

quette, *stood* on their legs, reading acts of Parliament or re-perusing the reports of their own speeches in the "Mirror of Parliament;" glad, to say the truth, to do any thing, or amuse themselves in any way, as a sort of excuse for retaining their perpendicuar position so long. Surely it is not uncharitable to suppose, that while they were thus suffering a living martyrdom, by standing on their legs, without even a place to rest their elbows on, they were inwardly wishing the Chancellor of the Exchequer in any other quarter than that in which he was. At last nature gave way, and one by one the deputation dropt down on boxes, piles of Parliamentary reports, or any thing else that held out the prospect of their being able to assume a sitting posture. Mr. O'Connell was among the first to find out a good resting-place for himself. He took up his temporary location in one of the windows, which was, fortunately for him, so planned at the lower part as to be nearly as good as a chair. Still he, as well as all present, betrayed unequivocal symptoms of restlessness; and now and then gave utterance to

complaints at being detained so long. I thought it was exceedingly unkind of Mr. Spring Rice thus to treat so many of the uniform and zealous supporters of the Administration to which he belonged; and it was with me a question whether the circumstance might not issue in Mr. O'Connell's detaching himself and party from the Melbourne ministry. All the world knows that it was attended with no such result.

Nature, it strikes me, intended Mr. Spring Rice for receiving deputations. He has the enviable knack of always seeing them bid him good morning and quit Downing Street, with the full conviction that he has entered into their views, and that their wishes will be acceded to. Does he then commit himself by making any specific promise or pledge on the subject? Not he. He is too cautious,—much too wary for any thing of the kind. How then does he contrive to leave this favourable impression, or to produce this pleasing conviction in their minds? Just by the everlasting smile which plays on his countenance; by the agreeableness of his manner; and by his speaking to them in

a way as favourable as possible to their views, without giving any explicit assurance on the subject. I never yet knew a deputation part with him without thinking they had succeeded in the object of their errand. "Oh, he'll do it!" "Oh, he's quite favourable to our views!" are expressions which are sure to be uttered by one or more of the deputation, as they reach the outside of the office. The others assent to the opinion, and thus show that they share the conviction. In how many cases has the event shewn that the impression was groundless!

The most striking instance I ever remember to have witnessed of Mr. Spring Rice's surpassing adroitness in dealing with deputations, occurred about two years and a half ago. The occasion was that of a deputation of gentlemen selected from the leading parishes in Westminster, to wait on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the view of procuring the repeal or the reduction of an obnoxious tax. The deputation proceeded to Downing Street with the full determination of obtaining, at all hazards, from the Right Hon. Gentleman, an explicit declara-

tion of his intentions with regard to the particular tax in question. They were not to be put off with assurances of his taking the subject into his "careful and unbiassed consideration." They were resolved to be satisfied with nothing short of a statement of his views which should be so distinct and unequivocal as to be tantamount to an "Aye" or "No," to the question, whether he would repeal or reduce the tax, or not. They accordingly introduced first themselves, and then their subject. The oppressiveness and obnoxiousness of the tax, and the peculiar severity with which it pressed on the classes they represented, were pointed out with great clearness and peculiar emphasis, and appeals were made to Mr. Spring Rice's sense of justice, and to his "known" anxiety to avert the ruin of the parties chiefly affected. With these appeals to his better feelings, there were intermingled various complimentary observations which had a good deal of the appearance of flattery, and which were doubtless made use of with the view of cajoling or coaxing him into a declaration to the effect that the tax in ques-

tion could either be entirely abolished, or considerably reduced. But all their ingenuity went for nothing. The bait would not "take." They found him, as the proverb has it, "too old a bird to be caught by chaff." He was as lavish of his smiles as ever; the seven rings which adorn his fingers, sparkled in all their wonted brilliancy; he was dressed with more than his accustomed elegance, of which fact he seemed to be duly aware; and his words were as smooth and honied as any that ever escaped his lips; but though thus having all the appearance of a fine gentleman, and though no one who witnessed his excessive politeness and extreme plausibility, could for a moment have deemed it possible that he could have withheld from the deputation the satisfactory declaration they were so anxious to obtain,—this was soon found to be an erroneous impression. Nothing but the usual vague expressions, which like a King's or Queen's Speech may be understood to mean anything or nothing, could be elicited from him. The deputation were dissatisfied, and entreated him to be more explicit. Without

appearing to comprehend the nature of their request, and with the same profusion of smiles and sugar-candied expressions as those with which he had sought to amuse them before,—Mr. Spring Rice, now perceiving that he was beginning to be rather closely pressed, said there were various taxes which he was desirous either to repeal or reduce; and that among such taxes there were some that would give great relief to the manufacturers and producers of certain articles. "Just allow me, gentlemen," said Mr. Spring Rice, "to show you some most beautiful specimens of fancy glass-work of Birmingham manufacture, and which, were the taxes on glass abolished, could be produced at such a price as would have the effect of keeping foreigners out of the British market. That, gentlemen, I am sure you will admit to be a most desirable thing."

There was not a member of the deputation that did not signify his concurrence in the remark.

"Well, gentlemen, just let me show you these beautiful specimens of fancy glass-work," and so saying, he proceeded to a cupboard-looking sort of place, in the corner of the room,

and took out two fancy glass plates, which certainly were incomparably the most beautiful things of the kind I have ever seen.

"Are they not beautiful, gentlemen?" continued Mr. Spring Rice, as he handed the plates to the deputation.

"They *are*, indeed," answered every one present, as the plates were circulated round the company.

"Now, gentlemen, were it not for the duty on glass, our British manufacturers would not only be able to exclude foreigners from the market, but they would display greater ingenuity and taste in their fancy articles than foreigners are capable of doing; for they would then, by an increased consumption of the glass, have a greater inducement to exercise their skill in the production of tasteful patterns. Don't you think so?"

"We do!" was the unanimous answer.

"These are really beautiful articles," resumed the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as the two glass plates, which I should have before observed, were most tastefully ornamented with inwrought gold, bearing in some respects a

resemblance to the finest gilded china,—were returned to him. Mr. Spring Rice replaced the two beautiful specimens of fancy glass-work in the locality whence he produced them, and then, after addressing a few more words to the deputation, in continuation of the praises of the "specimens," he pulled out his watch, as if intending thereby to give them a gentle hint that they had already consumed too much of his time. They took the hint, whether intended or not, though I have no doubt it was; and bidding him good morning, walked themselves out of the office, their heads filled with the "specimens," and entirely forgetful of the "obnoxious and oppressive tax," which had brought them to Downing Street. Before they had got the length of the Privy Council room, the fact flashed across their minds, that they had not, after all, succeeded in their object of eliciting from the Right Honourable Gentleman any explicit declaration as to his intentions with regard to the retention or repeal of the "odious impost." But the thought occurred too late; they could not venture to return to Mr. Spring

Rice, and though they had done so, he would have taken care not to vouchsafe to them a second interview. His object had been gained, and while they were bitterly reproaching themselves with their folly, in suffering their attention to be withdrawn by the fancy glass plates, from the purpose of their visit to Downing Street, he was doubtless laughing in his sleeve at the success of his "ingenious device" for getting rid of such troublesome customers.

When Mr. Spring Rice is in expectation of receiving a deputation on any subject of great importance, and has not made up his mind as regards his future policy in reference to it, but on which subject he is desirous of procuring further information from the deputation,—he makes a point of inviting Lord John Russell to be present. I remember seeing Lord John on several such occasions in the office of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and I could not help being struck with the contrast which the two ministers presented to each other in their deportment. While Mr. Spring Rice was all bustle, affectation, and self-importance, Lord

John was as stationary and unassuming as the table at which he sat. He patronized an easy chair on the last occasion on which I saw him assisting Mr. Spring Rice in carrying on an interview with a deputation. In that chair he deposited his little person, and, throwing his right leg carelessly over his left, and intermingling the thumb and fingers of one hand with the thumb and fingers of the other,—there he sat as motionless, and looking, as he usually does, as pale as a statue; his eye, however, beaming with intelligence, and his countenance indicating that shrewdness which is one of the most prominent traits in his character. His questions to the deputation were few, but they were exceedingly pertinent. I have never seen any person wishing to get at the facts and arguments bearing on a particular question, pursue a course more adapted to accomplish his end.

Of all the Chancellors of the Exchequer whom I have known, Lord Althorp, now Earl Spencer, had the largest amount of candour and straightforwardness, and the greatest simplicity of manner. He was the most unofficial and

the least courtier-like person I ever saw, either in Downing Street, or any where else. In his office, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, his manners were as plain and unsophisticated as if he had spent all his days in fattening cattle — an occupation, I may remark by the way, which was far more congenial to his taste than to preside over the financial department of our national affairs. To breed a Smithfield prize ox, was, and still is, the summit of his lordship's ambition; while to prepare the annual budget was to him the most irksome task which ever human being was called on to perform. Never was man more out of his element than was Lord Althorp when fate doomed him to a local habitation in Downing Street. Still his unbounded good nature, and his unruffled and unruffleable equanimity of disposition, prevented his ever betraying any uneasiness of feeling when acting as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Every person who had occasion to do business with him, was not only struck but delighted with the unaffected ease and agreeableness of his manners. Deputations

that went to his office for the purpose of badgering him on account of his retention of some obnoxious tax, forgot all their discontents before they had been two minutes in his company; and felt themselves disarmed of all hostility to the minister. It was, indeed, impossible to be angry or acrimonious in Lord Althorp's presence: his singularly good-natured countenance dispersed in a moment, as if by a magical agency, the sourness which was so visible in the visages of certain disaffected Radicals who were in the habit of appointing themselves deputations to him, to remonstrate against real or imaginary grievances. He always listened with the greatest patience to their representations, or *mis*representations, as the case might be; and then, if decided in his own mind that their wishes could not be acceded to, he told them so in plain terms. If he had not made up his mind on the matter, he would intimate his intention of taking it into consideration; and if he did intend to adopt their views from a conviction of their expediency and practicability, he would give the deputation some implied in-

timation to that effect, by admitting the justice of their representations, and expressing his intention to take an early opportunity of attending to them. Such was usually the manner of Lord Althorp when Chancellor of the Exchequer. In his personal appearance, he was the same in Downing Street as he always was in the House of Commons. He not only dressed with great plainness, but had his double-breasted sandy-coloured cassimere waistcoat, always buttoned up close to his chin,—just as if braving all the rigours of a Kamschatka winter, instead of breathing the genial atmosphere of a comfortable room in Downing Street.

Sir Robert Peel, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, which office, it may be remembered he filled in 1834-35, in conjunction with that of the Premiership, was chiefly remarkable in all his intercourse with those who had public business to transact with him, for a union of dignity of deportment with the most condescending demeanour. Persons felt at once at ease in his presence, without experiencing the slightest

tendency to a feeling of familiarity. Unlike Mr. Spring Rice, he carefully guarded against the utterance of any expressions which could inspire hopes which were not destined to be realised. He was exceedingly cautious in what he said; I do not believe he ever committed himself even by implication. He was a singularly excellent business man. No one ever more thoroughly devoted himself to the duties of his office. He threw his whole soul into those duties. He rose early and worked late. I myself have seen him (as I once hinted in another work) in his office as Chancellor of the Exchequer, a little after ten in the morning, though the previous evening, or rather that same morning, he had been in the House of Commons until two o'clock, after having spoken, in his capacity of the head of the government, for upwards of two hours in defence of the policy of his administration. It is to Sir Robert Peel's unwearied attention to business when in power, coupled with his admirable business habits, that we are to ascribe the fact of his having so efficiently discharged, at one and the same

time, the duties of the Premiership and those which devolve on the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The COLONIAL OFFICE is at the farthest end of Downing Street, having a front view, as you enter that locality. It has a private entrance in the right-hand corner. The public entrance is in the centre of the house. It has rather a better exterior than the houses just alluded to. It has a double door, with a semi-circular glass top, while, in the case of the offices before mentioned the door is single, without any glass top. It has also a post on each side of the door: the doors of the other houses have no such ornament. It is a commodious and comfortable place inside. To get a sight of the present Colonial Secretary is nearly as difficult as it would be to get access to the most retired Eastern prince. The Premier and the Chancellor of the Exchequer may, at any time, be seen in their own offices, if the matter be managed with ordinary skill; but he must be a clever personage indeed, who, without a certain rank, or filling some important situation imme-

diately connected with the Colonial Department, procures an interview with Lord Glenelg. Nay, it is an achievement which argues more than the average ingenuity, to obtain an interview with Mr. Grant, the brother and Secretary of his lordship. A more inaccessible couple than Lord Glenelg and his Secretary have rarely presided over any of the more important departments of the public service. Scarcely less difficult is it to obtain an answer to any letter you may address the former. If you write, and respectfully solicit, because your letter requires, an immediate answer, you may think yourself one of the favoured correspondents of his lordship, if such answer be received within three weeks after your epistle has reached the Colonial Office. Very possibly you will get no answer at all. Various hypotheses have been advanced to account for this remissness on the part of Lord Glenelg. I shall only advert to two of these. It is said, and by many with a full belief in the truth of the statement, that his lordship indulges in sleep to a very unusual extent, and that to this circumstance is

his remissness in this respect to be attributed. I reject this theory at once. I admit that he usually has a very somnolent appearance; but so far from squandering away his time by sleeping more than the general run of men do, I am convinced that he actually sleeps less than most other persons. If I am not greatly mistaken, his servants will any day bear testimony to the fact, that he is an early riser, and is late in going to bed. I do believe that he devotes more hours, on an average each day to public business, than the majority of his colleagues. If this be so, the sleepy hypothesis is demolished at once. Another theory is, that his lordship is indolent, which, let it be observed, is quite compatible with his not sleeping away his time; for a man—Lord Melbourne for example—may be wide awake, and yet be by no means distinguished for the amount of business he goes through. I cannot adopt this second hypothesis, any more than the soporific one, in the sense in which it is understood. Its advocates mean that Lord Glenelg wiles away his time in idleness. Here I am at issue with them. I

maintain, from information privately received, that Lord Glenelg is no idler. I contend that, on the contrary, he is an industrious man, though not industrious as the Colonial Secretary. I am assured that he reads a great deal; and that much of his time is occupied in corresponding with old acquaintances in the county of Inverness, on matters pertaining to his property and interests in that county. I speak from personal knowledge, when I say that he is so exceedingly anxious to stand well in the estimation of Highland lairds and other persons of influence in the north of Scotland, that if any thing occurred which he conceived likely to prejudice him in the opinions of such persons, he would "write by the first night's post" to the North, and write too with his own hand, and at very great length, with the view of setting himself right in their estimation. Let me not be here understood as meaning to insinuate, that if Lord Glenelg were to receive, by the same post, a dispatch announcing an insurrection in Canada, and a letter from a Highland chieftain, that his anxiety to stand well in the good

graces of his Celtic correspondent, would induce his lordship to give his earliest attention to the letter of the latter. I do not believe any thing of the kind, whatever ill-natured people may say. I should also remark, as illustrative of my assertion that Lord Glenelg is not the indolent man he is so generally supposed to be, that he devotes much of his time to theology. I believe that, did he choose, he would appear to very great advantage, were he to take the field as a writer, either on controversial or practical divinity. Most people are aware that some years since he used regularly to attend the anniversaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in Exeter Hall, and that on such occasions he made speeches, which for the intimate knowledge they displayed both of doctrinal and experimental Christianity, might have put many of our bishops and other dignitaries of the church to the blush. When the Apocrypha controversy was at its height, Lord Glenelg, then Mr. Charles Grant, mastered all the details of that rather intricate controversy, and ably vindicated the Parent Institution, or the Earl

Street Committee, as the late Dr. Thomson of Edinburgh, Dr. Brown of Berwick, now of Swallow Street, London, and other able assailants of the directors of the British and Foreign Bible Society, used to call its directors.

But not only does Lord Glenelg devote much of his time to theological pursuits, in so far as respects reading theological works, but many of his hours are spent in the composition of small pieces of poetry of a highly religious character. Some time ago, a northern Baronet, an intimate friend of his lordship, shewed me a manuscript production of his of this nature, which struck me as equally beautiful for its religious feeling and the character of its poetry. But Lord Glenelg does not always content himself with confining his poetical efforts on religious topics to mere manuscript productions. He has not only written, but published a number of sacred hymns, which possessing, in addition to their poetic beauties, the still greater recommendation of evangelical piety, several of them have found their way into the collections of hymns which are used in some of our dissenting

chapels in London. In that admirable selection of hymns made in 1836, by Mr. Josiah Conder, at the request of a committee of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, and which has been adopted by a number of London congregations, will be found two hymns by Lord Glenelg, remarkable alike for their piety and poetry.

If Lord Glenelg does not spend much of his time in the official residence in Downing-street, attached to his office, the circumstance is not so much to be wondered at in his case as in that of some of the other members; for Lord Glenelg's private residence is in George Street, Storey's Gate, which is not above a hundred yards distant from the Colonial Office.

Next to the Colonial is the FOREIGN OFFICE, the entrance to which is not unlike the entrance to its neighbour of the Colonial Department. The Foreign Office is directly opposite that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's, so that Lord Palmerston and Mr. Spring Rice might, if at any time they should feel so disposed, speak across the street from their respective

windows, to each other. The Foreign Office is, as a whole, perhaps, better fitted up and more spacious in its apartments than any of the others. One of its rooms is peculiarly commodious and elegant. I allude to the apartment in which all the Cabinet Councils are held. If the fact should not before have occurred to the mind of the reader, it may be worth being here mentioned, that all the ministerial meetings and deliberations take place in this office. Who then shall need to be told, what important measures have been first brought into a tangible shape in that room? Who shall say what has been the influence, on the one hundred and twenty millions of persons who acknowledge their subjection to British sway, of measures which have been broached, brought forward, and agreed on in one little hour, in that apartment? Could the walls speak, what disclosures would they not make respecting the circumstances under which these momentous measures were adopted by the government? If walls had ears to hear, and a tongue to speak, what revelations would they not make of treachery to

recorded protestations, and apostacy from principles loudly professed in public! Little do the public think that the self-daubed patriot, who is so clamorous and declamatory on behalf of popular principles on the hustings, or in the senate, seizes with avidity and gladness of heart, the first opportunity afforded him of assassinating those principles, at the cabinet council meetings in the Foreign Office. In this room all the foreign ambassadors are also received; it is in fact called in a special sense, the Audience Chamber.

I could never—I do not know what other people can do—look at, or be in, the Foreign Office, without thinking of the tenacity with which Lord Palmerston has kept his hold of that office, amidst the repeated and extensive changes which have occurred in parties and in places within the last ten years. It mattered not to the Vicar of Bray, who was the sovereign; he was that sovereign's subject; and what was infinitely better, he was the Vicar of Bray. Equally little does it matter to Lord Palmerston, provided he be allowed to retain the Foreign

Secretaryship, who is Premier, or what that Premier's politics are. Mr. Albany Fonblanque, editor of the "Examiner," has written a book, which he has called, "England under Seven Administrations." That is precisely the number, if I mistake not, of Prime Ministers under whom his lordship has had the honour, for so he himself considers it, of serving his country—and himself. A manageable conscience in politics, as in everything else, is a mighty desirable thing. It saves those who have the good fortune to possess it, from many serious inconveniences. Dying for one's country, or principles! What could be more foolish? The thing is unintelligible. It were far more rational, if a person were fool-hardy enough to die for anything, to give up the ghost for one's place. Lord Palmerston will, I am sure, concur with me in this view of the case.

The Foreign Office always brings to my remembrance the celebrated dispute, some seven or eight years ago, between Holland and Belgium. Why, it may be asked, does the Foreign Office bring this afresh into my memory? Be-

cause it was in that office that Lord Palmerston well nigh pestered the King of Holland to death, by protocolling his majesty at so unmerciful a rate; upwards of a hundred prolix protocols were drawn up in that office, and fired from it at the head of that unfortunate monarch. To endure the breaking off of their allegiance to his majesty, on the part of his Belgian subjects, was no doubt a sufficiently serious calamity to him; but I am sure it must have dwindled into insignificance, when compared with a visitation of such frightful magnitude as the century of protocols.

Lord Palmerston is tolerably attentive in the discharge of his official duties. He is not often absent from Downing Street, when he ought to be there. Still, even in the most pressing emergency of foreign affairs, no consideration will induce him to make his appearance in the Foreign Office until he has devoted the allotted time to his toilet. There is not a lady in the land that attaches greater importance to the article of dress, than does his lordship. Hence, the many jokes which have been and daily are

expended on his personal appearance. These jokes, I should here observe, are always taken by his lordship in the best part. If those who are in the habit of calling him Cupid knew not only how little he cares, but how heartily he laughs, when that epithet is applied to him, it would not appear with such frequency in the columns of some of the Tory journals. I remember his making, in the last session of Parliament, such humorous allusions to his being called Cupid, as convulsed the House of Commons with laughter.

Lord Palmerston, it may not be amiss to mention, has the reputation of being able to converse with fluency in a greater number of the living languages of Europe than any other Englishman known to fame. Others may have a more general critical acquaintance with such languages than his lordship, but in the article of speaking them with ease, he is said to have no rival.

I am not sure whether the fact is worthy of observation, but it is a fact, that the Foreign Office is always protected by a soldier, who

performs the functions of a sentinel a few yards from the door. Why the Foreign Office should have this mark of distinction conferred on it, while neither the office of the Premier, nor that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, nor of the Colonial Secretary, has any such protection afforded them, I am at a loss to imagine.

No person accustomed to reflection can have been in Downing Street, without thinking of the interest which attaches to the locality, both in the eyes of the country, and of the civilized world. From all parts of the British empire, even from our remotest possessions in the East, and from every Court to which civilization has worked its way, despatches of the deepest moment are daily forwarded to Downing Street; and the answers to these despatches are in many cases looked forward to with an intensity of anxiety by monarchs and ministers, of which none but themselves can have any conception. From each of the offices in that street, though my remarks chiefly apply to the Foreign and Colonial Offices, bags of letters are every evening taken by a person in the service in the post-

office department, which contain communications whose importance is beyond all calculation. Were a person suffered to break open the bags, and to examine their contents, how varied and how momentous would they be found! and how conflicting would be the feelings of the parties immediately interested! There would be seen some foreign country's views defeated and hopes blasted; the wishes of another Court acceded to; a whole colony, and that too an extensive and populous one, treated with the grossest injustice; or it may be, about to have all their grievances redressed. A single sentence in one of the dispatches may avert a threatened war, or may interrupt the peace of Europe. From nations or colonies, there would be the descent to individuals. Some injured man who has stated his wrongs and demanded justice, is virtually told, if not in so many words, that he shall have no justice done him; another, perhaps, is assured that an immediate inquiry shall be instituted into his case, and redress afforded, if it be found that he has been wronged. One letter will

fill the breast of some dependent individual with inexpressible joy: it appoints him to a lucrative situation. Another epistle will almost break the heart of some other party, as it puts an extinguisher on all his fond hopes, by telling him that the official can do nothing on his behalf, which in most cases, means that he *will* do nothing for him.

So much for the various offices in Downing Street. The Home Office and most of the other offices of importance are in Whitehall, which, I may mention for the information of those unacquainted with the localities of that particular part of London, is situated on the right hand in the broad street which leads from Charing Cross to Parliament Street.

I cannot undertake to say with confidence what the number of letters is which is daily received in all or either of the four leading offices in Downing Street. The number necessarily varies with the state of public feeling and public opinion on particular subjects. At times of excitement in the country, a great addition is made to the number of the Premier's corres-

pondents. When the financial affairs of the nation wear an unpromising aspect, the Chancellor of the Exchequer finds a vast addition to the number of communications made to him in more prosperous times. The Secretary for the Colonies finds matters in pretty much the same position, in so far as he is concerned. Lord Glenelg, I will answer for it, found what Mr. O'Connell would call "a mighty" difference between the number of communications he received before and after the breaking out of the insurrection in Canada. In the Foreign Office, the same remark holds equally good. As a matter of course, the communications received by the Premier are much more numerous, than those received by any of the other officials in Downing Street. I am not aware what the average number may be which are addressed to Lord Melbourne; but if I remember rightly, the Duke of Wellington, when he filled the offices which Lord Melbourne now holds, often received from 150 to 200 per day.

How can any Minister, it will be asked by the uninitiated, continue to wade through such

a mass of correspondence. Bless the simple souls of those who can put such a question! No Minister ever does, or dreams of doing, such a thing. They have severally their secretaries whose duty it is to open and peruse all letters addressed to them, when there is not the name of the writer on the back to indicate that such letters are from particular persons. The secretaries, when they have read the epistles addressed to their masters, apprize the latter of their contents, without even producing them, and having received a verbal answer, they communicate such answer to the parties, the answers always being written as if from the Ministers themselves, and the name of the writer for the Minister, being duly attached to the letter. Hear this, all ye who imagine you have only to address a letter to some person filling some ministerial office, to have your letter duly brought before him, and carefully read and considered by him.

The applications which are daily made to the leading members of the government, are often of a most ridiculous kind. They are constantly

bored to give government situations to persons of whom they know nothing, and of whom they never before heard. It were well if such applications were confined to letters, because an epistle gives but little trouble, and is easily disposed of by giving it a location in the grate, previous to its evaporation in flame and smoke. But the evil of it is, that Ministers are daily subject to annoyances in the shape of personal applications for personal interviews relative to individual objects. Of course, many persons crave an interview, who never obtain it; but there are others, who are not to be defeated in their purpose, by a first or even second denial to see them, on the part of the Minister with whom they are desirous of having an interview. One curious case of this kind, which occurred a short time ago, comes within my own personal knowledge. The party to whom I refer, fancying that he had made a most momentous discovery, namely, the way in which 2,000,000*l.* might be annually added to the revenue without the imposition of any new tax,—was naturally desirous of an interview with the Chan-

cellor of the Exchequer on the subject. Time after time did he apply to Mr. Spring Rice for an audience; but in every instance without effect. The right honourable gentleman could not, because he would not, see him.

Still he was not to be baffled in his views. He sought an interview with Lord Melbourne, on the ground that he had made a discovery of great financial importance to the government and the country, which he was anxious to communicate to his lordship. As the matter related to the subject of finance, Lord Melbourne, as a matter of course, referred the party to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. "But," said the other, "he will not grant me an interview. Will your lordship," he added, "be kind enough to give me a note of introduction to him." Lord Melbourne, with that good nature and disposition to oblige, which are so characteristic of him, especially, as in this case, when he wishes not to be troubled himself, at once acceded to the request of the party, and requested Mr. Spring Rice to "hear" what he had got to say. Of course, the Chancellor of the Exchequer at once

complied with the Premier's wishes. So far the object of the party was gained. But then came the most amusing part of the matter. "Well, Sir," said Mr. Spring Rice, "I understand you have made some important discovery in finance, which you are anxious to communicate."

"I have made an important discovery," observed the other, with a very consequential air; for he was always on such excellent terms with himself, as to feel thoroughly persuaded that he was more gifted, in an intellectual sense, than any body else.

"Perhaps you would be kind enough to inform me what it is?" suggested the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

"It will, sir, make an annual addition to the revenue, of two millions, without imposing any fresh tax," answered the other, adjusting his collar, with great self-complacency.

"That is an important discovery, indeed," remarked Mr. Spring Rice.

"It *is* an important discovery, sir,"

"Pray, what may be its nature?" resumed Mr. Spring Rice.

"Ah, Mr. Rice," answered the other, making a wry face, "you don't surely think I am such a simpleton as to inform you of that?"

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gazed, for a a few seconds, in silent astonishment, on his visitor. "For what purpose, then," he inquired, "did you solicit this interview?"

"What I mean, sir," observed the other, "is, that I will not inform you of the discovery unless you gurantee to me beforehand, that you will settle on me a pension, of at least, £1,000 a-year, in return for so important a disclosure."

Mr. Spring Rice's astonishment deepened at the cool effrontery of his visitor.

"On no other terms will I reveal the important secret," continued the latter.

"But how, sir," asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, "could you, for a moment, expect that I should come under any such obligation as you propose, before I had learned the nature of your discovery? Perhaps, instead of adding two millions a-year to the revenue of the country, it might not add one farthing."

"I pledge myself," observed the other, "that

it *will* be worth two millions a-year to the government of the country."

"But *I* must be satisfied on that point," remarked Mr. Spring Rice, "before I make any promise of reward. Mention your discovery, and then I shall decide whether it is worth anything or not. If it be as important as you say, you shall be most liberally recompensed by the government for making it known."

"But, sir, if I were simple enough to mention the discovery, you might pretend you had previously made it yourself, and then, after appropriating my ideas, refuse me any recompense. I must have a guarantee for the compensation I have mentioned, before I communicate the discovery."

"Sir," said the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a very indignant tone, caused by the imputation on his personal honour, "I shall hold no further conversation with you on this, or any other subject."

Mr. Spring Rice hastily rose from his seat, and the other, seeing the abrupt and awkward conclusion to which the interview had been

brought, took up his hat and walked himself out of the apartment.

What the discovery was which this individual had made, or imagined he had made, still, I presume, remains a secret in his own breast. I am indebted to himself for the previous facts; but he evinced as great an indisposition to inform me of the discovery itself, as he did in the case of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He stated that it was connected with the newspaper-press, but beyond that fact he preserved an unbroken silence.

But one of the most amusing anecdotes respecting interviews of private individuals with Ministers, which consists with my own knowledge, is the following:—Some time after the passing of the Reform Bill, and when Mr. Hume was in the zenith of his reputation and influence, as the friend of Liberal principles, a licentiate of the Scotch Church, well known in Edinburgh—though I forbear to mention his name—taking advantage of being accidentally two or three times in the company of the then Member for Middlesex,—called one day at

Bryanston Square, and, sending up his card, solicited a short interview with Mr. Hume. The Honourable Member (now for Kilkenny), with his usual readiness to see an old friend, at once desired the servant to show the party upstairs. Mr. Hume's bidding was promptly done, and in less than a minute the Presbyterian licentiate, who, I should observe, without being positively insane, was what is called in Scotland, "a little crack," stood before Mr. Hume as large as life. The usual courtesies having been exchanged, which they were in a mongrel sort of language—half Scotch, half English,—the Presbyterian divine stated that his chief object in calling at that particular time on the Member for Middlesex, was to apprise him that a certain bishopric was vacant, owing to the death of the dignitary who had filled it.

"I am perfectly aware of that," observed Mr. Hume, rather surprised at the party in stating such a fact to him.

"Oh! you are aware of it then, are you, Mr. Hume?" remarked the other.

"I should suppose every body who reads the papers is so, as well as myself, for it has been stated in all the public journals."

"Verra guid," said the Scotch divine, in a strong Auld Reekie accent: "I'm glad ye are aware of the vacancy, for I have ta'en the liberty of calling on you to see if you would get me an appointment to the vacant See."

"*I* get you appointed to a bishopric!" exclaimed Mr. Hume, surprised beyond measure, and no wonder, at the extraordinary nature of the application. "What could have put that into your head?" continued the Member for Middlesex. "*I* have not the power of making bishops."

"I never imagined you had," replied the other with a coolness and collectedness of manner which were rather at variance with the hypothesis that he had what in vulgar phraseology is called "a bee in his bonnet: "I never imagined you had; but I thought that you might possibly have the necessary influence with those who have the power."

An idea occurred to Mr. Hume. Though

there is not a man in the world more innocent of a disposition to have a joke at other people's expense, the temptation to have a little fun on this occasion was too powerful to be resisted. "You are a Presbyterian," said he, addressing himself to the candidate for the vacant See; "and how could your conscience allow you to embrace Episcopacy?"

"Conscience, Mr. Hume! Conscience, where some thousands a-year are concerned!"

"Well, then, you had better apply to Lord Grey. He is Prime Minister, and the appointment is vested in him.

"But where is he to be seen?"

"Why, at his official residence in Downing Street."

"Could I see him just now?" inquired the Presbyterian aspirant of a mitre and its emoluments, with considerable eagerness.

"No doubt of it," answered the honourable Member for Middlesex.

"Then I'll bid you good morning, Mr. Hume."

"Good morning," echoed the honourable gentleman.

The "stickit minister"—as licentiates of the Church of Scotland, who are not fortunate to get a church, are often called—having, as he spoke, snatched up his hat and made his best bow to Mr. Hume,—quitted the residence of the latter, and proceeded with all the expedition of a practised pedestrian to Downing Street. He soon found out the office of the Premier, and at once requested the porter at the door to be admitted into his presence.

"Your name, sir?" demanded the porter.

The name was at once given, and was forthwith verbally communicated to Earl Grey, the Scotch divine not being sufficiently fashionable to sport a card. The Premier had never heard of such a person before, and could not see him. A message to that effect was delivered to the applicant for the vacant bishopric; but he was not to be so easily diverted from his purpose: he was not thus to be defeated in his objects. "Tell Earl Grey," said he to the bearer of the message—and in this consisted the ingenuity of

the Scotch Presbyterian, and also the infliction of righteous retribution on Mr. Hume for the joke which he had played off at his countryman's expense;—" tell Earl Grey that I am a particular friend of Mr. Hume's, and that I have most important communication from that gentleman, to make to his Lordship."

The message was conveyed to Earl Grey, and the Member for Middlesex being at that time one of the most zealous and efficient supporters in the country, of his Lordship's Administration, the party was at once admitted to an interview, and received with great politeness.

" I have called," said the Scotchman, after a moment's pause, and without a word in the shape of preface; " I have called to solicit the honour of an appointment by your Lordship to the vacant bishopric of ——."

Lord Grey was so completely confounded, as to be unable for some time to utter a word. At length he said, " May I ask, sir, who you are?"

" Oh, certainly," answered the other. " I

am from Edinburgh; and am a licentiate of the Church of Scotland; but am quite willing to join the Church of England, if I can get a good living in it."

This was to Lord Grey confusion worse confounded. "I understood," observed his Lordship, after a momentary pause, "that you had some important communication to make to me from Mr. Hume!"

"Certainly, my Lord, and so I have, on a matter most important to *me*. It was at Mr. Hume's request that I came here, he having desired me to call on your Lordship, and solicit from you the presentation to the vacant bishopric."

The thought now flashed for the first time across his Lordship's mind, that the man must be labouring under a greater or less measure of mental aberration. He, therefore, with the view of getting the more easily rid of him, said he would see Mr. Hume on the subject. The other thanked his Lordship and quitted the office, thinking with himself that he was now sure of the bishopric, inasmuch as there could

be no doubt that his friend the Member for Middlesex, would successfully exert his influence on his behalf, if once he and the Premier were brought together on the subject.

Only imagine Mr. Hume's surprise and mortification, when his Scotch Presbyterian friend returned to Bryanston Square, and informed him that he had used his name to Earl Grey, and that his lordship was to have a meeting with him relative to his appointment to the vacant See. Mr. Hume vowed that from that moment he should never adventure a joke, nor attempt a hoax, at the expense of any individual on earth. This was the first experiment in the jocular way he had made, and as it turned out so badly, the determination he came to that it should be the last, was just what might have been expected.

I could relate various other amusing instances, which consist with my own knowledge, of the way in which the Ministerial tenants of Downing Street are literally persecuted by eccentric or unreasonable persons into a compliance with their solicitations for an interview;

but the space I have already allotted to this chapter renders it necessary I should now draw it to a close.

I have only further to observe, that the present administration are anything but popular among the inferior officers in Downing Street. The latter say they cannot endure the face of a Whig, especially a Whig minister. They maintain that it is the reverse of English-like. They institute at times very unpleasant comparisons between the existing Whig ministers, and the ministers who used to inhabit Downing Street in the good old days of Toryism. Nor is it to be wondered at, that with at least one portion of the servants of the powers that be in Downing Street, the present Cabinet should be very unpopular, when it is remembered that that Cabinet has carried its notions of economy to such an extent, as to discontinue the taking in of certain papers which are opposed to them, on the alleged ground of *expense to the nation;* which papers had, according to immemorial practice, been the perquisites of those servants. These latter call this a very "unkind cut,"

especially when it is remembered what a world of patronage these same Whigs have created in order to provide for their own hungry friends. I must confess that I take precisely the same view of the matter. This peddling three-farthing economy is unworthy of any government: it is a reflection on such a country as England. It wears a most awkward and ugly aspect when it is contrasted with the prodigality with which the same parties lavish the public money on those who are their "most obedient servants" in Parliament or in any other sphere, where, to use the language of that class of advertisements beginning with "Situations wanted," they have proved themselves willing to make themselves "generally useful."

CHAPTER V.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

The Building—Origin and History of the Museum—The Exhibition Rooms—Moral reflections suggested by witnessing their contents—Number of persons who visit the institution.

THE British Museum is perhaps the most valuable of all our public institutions. It is every day rising more and more into importance, and is at the same time making a corresponding progress in public favour. It is situated near the east end of Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury. Reserving the Reading Room and Library of the institution for a separate chapter, I shall in the present case, after a few historical remarks, make some observations, and com-

municate some facts which are not generally known, respecting the rooms which are appropriated to the wonders of nature and art.

The building itself is one of great magnitude. On entering the gate, a spacious quadrangle presents itself. On the south side is an Ionic colonnade. Directly before you is the main building, while the two wings on either hand, between the gate and the entrance to the principal building, are appropriated as dwelling-places for the officers of the institution. The main edifice was originally the mansion of the Duke of Montague, and was erected by Peter Puget, a native of Marseilles, who was brought over from Paris for the purpose. This was towards the close of the seventeenth century. The property which was called Montague House, was purchased in 1754 by the trustees of the British Museum from the heirs of the Duke of Montague, with the view of fitting it up for the reception and exhibition of the valuable library, manuscripts, and collection of curiosities in nature, art, and science, which had, the year before, been bequeathed to go-

vernment by Sir Hans Sloane, for the benefit of the nation, on the payment of 20,000*l.* to his heirs and successors. The library and museum of Sir Hans Sloane, which were thus given to the public on the condition of 20,000*l.* being paid in return to his heirs, were supposed to have been worth nearly 100,000*l.* He had purchased the various books, manuscripts, and curiosities at the cheapest possible rate, as occasion offered during the long period he practised as physician in Chelsea, and he stated some time before his death that they had cost him considerably upwards of 50,000*l.* The price paid for Montague House was 10,000*l.*

But capacious as this mansion was, it was soon found far too small for the additions of valuable articles of various kinds which, year after year, were made to the Museum. Repeated enlargements have from time to time been consequently made, by erections, chiefly at the back part of the building. Within the last twelve or fourteen years nearly one-half more space has been provided by additions to the numerous buildings. The magnitude of

these may be inferred from the fact, that the expense has been little short of 300,000*l.*

Soon after the British Museum had been duly recognised as a national institution, Parliament, having obtained possession of the museum which had been collected by Sir Robert Cotton in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and had been greatly increased by his son,—passed an act transferring his collection of books, curiosities, &c., to the British Museum, for the benefit of the nation. Independently of a library of printed books and manuscripts, including books of prints and drawings, the Cottonian collection consists of the following articles:—

Coins and metals	23,000
Antique idols, utensils, &c.	1,125
Cameos, intaglios, seals, &c.	1,500
Vessels and utensils of agate, jasper, &c.	542
Anatomical preparations of human bodies, parts of mummies, calculi, &c.	756
Quadrupeds, and their parts	8,186

Birds, and their parts, eggs, and nests	1,172
Fishes, and their parts	1,555
Amphibia	521
Crustacea	1,436
Shells, echini, entrochi	5,845
Insects	5,394
Corals, spunges, zoophytes.	1,421
Stones, ores, bitumens, salts, &c.	9,942
Volumes of dried plants	334
Mathematical instruments	55
Miscellaneous artificial curiosities.	2,098

Manuscript catalogues of the whole Museum, thirty-eight volumes folio, and eight volumes quarto.

I have referred thus minutely to the Sloanian and Cottonian collections, because they form the basis of the splendid Museum which is now exhibited to the public, and which, though defective in certain departments, is regarded as a whole with admiration by men of all nations; and, as will be inferred from the statements I am about to make, it is worthy of all the admiration with which it is regarded.

Along with the Cottonian library and museum, Parliament, at the same time, had at its disposal 2000 volumes of books which had been appended to the Cottonian library by Major Arthur, of St. George's, Hanover Square, together with the reversion of 7000*l.* for the purpose of erecting a suitable place as a public library. This was also granted by the Legislature to the British Museum, and therefore became part of the new Cottonian foundation. Some time after this, Parliament purchased for the British Museum the entire collection of Harleian manuscripts. The collection was, at the time, the property of the Countess of Oxford, and the sum paid was 10,000*l.* In this collection there were no fewer than 40,000 original rolls, charters, and other instruments, many of which are of great antiquity, while nearly the whole relate to the political, parliamentary, and ecclesiastical history of Great Britain.

To meet the various sums thus expended in providing a National Museum, and to secure a permanent fund for its support, Parliament resolved to raise 100,000*l.* by way of lottery.

This having been done, a balance of 28,663*l.* remained after liquidating the debts incurred by purchases and repairs of the building. This sum was laid out in the purchase of 30,000*l.* three per cent. Reduced Annuities, in order to constitute a permanent fund for the maintenance of the institution. This was three or four years after the purchase of Montague House. In 1759, the repairs of the building having been completed, and the various articles being properly arranged, the Museum was for the first time opened to the public for the purposes of study and inspection.

Since this time, a great many presents of books have been made to the Museum, and several small libraries have been purchased for and added to it, to which it is unnecessary to refer in detail. Various sums of money and private collections of curiosities have also been bequeathed to it, while other collections have been purchased by Parliament. Among the gifts may be mentioned that of Sir Joseph Banks to the trustees of the British Museum. It consisted of a great number of very valuable

natural and artificial curiosities, collected in the then newly-discovered South Sea Islands. Some idea of the number and variety of the articles* contained in the British Museum, will be found in an after part of this chapter. What the entire sum is, which must, from first to last, have been paid for the contents of this institution, is a point which I cannot determine; and it is one which I suppose no one else could, as I believe regular accounts of the money expended in the purchase of articles have not always been kept. If I may hazard a conjecture on the subject, I should say the entire sum must be considerably above half a million.

On entering the British Museum, the mind is completely overpowered by the variety and multiplicity of the objects which present themselves to the eye. There is, if I may so speak, a competition among them as to which has a preferable claim to the visiter's attention. The result is, that many persons are so confounded

* I here exclude the books, manuscripts, &c., in the library of this institution, as I mean to devote a subsequent chapter to them.

with what they see around them, that they come away without any very definite notions of the place and its multifarious contents. Every one has heard of individuals having a great variety of objects set before them, and, on being asked to make a selection for themselves, have felt unable to decide, from the very number and nearly equal value of those objects. It is the same in the British Museum. The productions of nature and art which are here exhibited, are so varied, and are all so wonderful of their respective kinds, that one literally feels it next to impossible to give his undivided attention for any time to any particular object. I need not add, that on one short visit it very rarely happens that any one object is fully examined, or that the visiter receives that pleasure from inspecting it, which, under other circumstances, he could not fail to have derived from it. Indeed it is quite common to see visiters passing on from one room to another as rapidly as if there were nothing but the bare walls before them. To see the British Museum to advantage, it is necessary that repeated visits

be paid to it. When one visits it two or three times, the distracting gloss of novelty in some measure wears off; the party feels his attention less distracted by the number and variety of the objects around him, and is enabled to examine every thing which presents itself to his eye with some measure of attention.

On entering the ground-floor of the Museum, the objects which present themselves to the visiter's eye are not numerous; but some of them are very interesting. Perhaps the most curious and generally attractive of these is one of the originals of Magna Charta, which is exhibited in the first room. It belongs to the Cottonian library, and is protected from the action of the atmosphere or the touch of visiters, by being placed in a glazed frame. Parts of it are considerably defaced, but other parts are as legible as if it had been the production of yesterday. The ground-floor consists of sixteen rooms; but as these are appropriated to the books, strangers are not admitted into them.

Proceeding up stairs, you are struck, on reaching the first landing-place, with a Lama

from South America. On the second landing place are a Musk-ox from Melville Island, and a Polar bear; both of which are objects of interest. On the upper landing-place are a male and female Giraffe, or Cameleopard, and a Hippopotamus or River-horse. In any situation these animals would have a striking appearance; in the situation in which they stand in the Museum, their appearance is peculiarly striking.

The first room on the upper floor contains a great variety of most curious objects. Among the most interesting of these are the Esquimaux dresses; specimens of cloth from the Sandwich Islands, formed of the bark of the paper mulberry; spears, bows, arrows, and other warlike instruments used by the natives of various savage countries; and a number of small carved deities from the South Sea Islands. Who can look on the latter objects, and think that any portion of our fellow creatures should fall down before them, and worship them as gods, without blushing for the ignorance, and superstition, and credulity of the human mind,

when it has not been brought within the agency of Christianity?

The second, third, and fourth rooms on the first floor are chiefly devoted to a collection of dried plants. When it is remembered that the number of plants of one kind or other, which are now known, is under 80,000, the number in the British Museum must be regarded as very large. What the exact number is, I have not the means of ascertaining; but it is above rather than under 45,000. These plants chiefly consist of the collection made by Sir Joseph Banks. Sir Joseph's collection amounted to no fewer than 30,000. Since then a large and valuable donation of Indian plants has been made by the directors of the East India Company; not to mention additions which are being daily made by the donations of, and purchases from, private individuals. The collection of plants in our national Museum is by far the most extensive and most valuable in the world, with the single exception of that in the Jardin du Roi at Paris.

The fifth, the sixth, and the seventh rooms

are principally occupied with Sir Joseph Banks's library.

The eighth apartment is exceedingly miscellaneous in its contents. Impressions of ancient seals, vases, and vessels of every kind; busts of men, animals, and inanimate things; statues, armoury, &c., are among the productions of art which are here exhibited.

Next comes the saloon, in which the collection of quadrupeds or mammalia, to adopt the technical term made use of in the nomenclature of naturalists, is placed. In this department of zoology, the British Museum is, I am sorry to say, very deficient. The number of species perfectly well known to naturalists, and fully and accurately described, is 1200; while in our great national institution the number is only 400. This deficiency is the more to be regretted, and the less to be excused, as a collection of quadrupeds worthy of this country might be formed with great ease, and in a very short time. Nor would the expense be very serious; for though the stuffing and putting up particular

quadrupeds might be as high as 50*l.** or even 60*l.*, yet this would occur in extremely few cases, while, on an average, the expense would not be above fifteen or twenty shillings; and what would 1200*l.* or 1500*l.* be, in such a case, to a country like Great Britain?

In the ninth room the upper cases containing various quadrupeds, are intended as supplementary to the mammalia exhibited in the saloon. The other cases of this apartment are occupied by various specimens of crustacea, amphibia, invertebrated animals in spirits, insects, corals, reptiles, &c. To the curious this apartment presents a great variety of exceedingly interesting objects.

The collection of insects is very imperfect. It is altogether unworthy of a national Museum. Though thenumber of species which are known, classified, and described by entomologists be upwards of 150,000, there are only 25,000 in

* The most expensive case of stuffing and putting up an animal of which I have ever heard, is that mentioned by Mr. Vigors, the member of Parliament. That gentleman states that the expense of stuffing and putting up the Giraffe in the Regent's Park Zoological Gardens was no less than 150*l.*

the British Museum; and they are very badly arranged. The Paris Museum contains specimens of upwards of 100,000 species, and the Berlin Museum boasts of about 90,000.

No man whose mind is rightly constituted can look on the specimens of the insect creation which are exhibited in the British Museum, though not so numerous as in those institutions I have mentioned, without feeling his thoughts ascend towards the Creator. Many of them are exceedingly small, and unenlightened man would be apt to regard them as too insignificant to be worthy of a moment's thought. With far other feelings will they be regarded by him who has learned to take a more comprehensive view of the relation which subsists between the Source of all existence and his works. He will find that the most diminutive insect in this vast collection derived its being as much from the universal Maker, and on Him, when alive, was as much dependent for its continued existence, as man himself. It is true that man is destined by the Supreme Being to fulfil purposes in the divine economy peculiar

to himself, and is consequently, in that respect, immeasurably superior to the lower creation. Still there is not an insect, nor a creature of any kind, whose being or preservation was the result of chance. Every creature under heaven was made for some special, though to us unknown, purpose. And the philosophic observer will discover, in the structure of the smallest and meanest insect, the clearest proofs of the infinite wisdom by which it was created. I have heard of atheists being converted by a careful and enlightened examination of the fearful and wonderful manner in which insects are formed. Intelligence, design, and wisdom were so manifestly displayed in their formation, that there was no resisting the conviction that it must be the work of a Divine Being.

The tenth room contains the general collection of reptiles in spirits. Of these the specimens are at once numerous and curious. To the mere naked eye many of them appear most odious; but he who can look upwards to the Source whence they all derived their being, can

regard them with feelings of a very different description.

In the eleventh room is contained the general collection of fishes and corals. The species of fish of which specimens are to be seen in the British Museum is 1300. This is a goodly number. It is greater than the number contained in any other museum in the world, with the single exception of that of Paris, which is singularly rich in its specimens of the finny tribe: for it contains no fewer than 4700 species. Who can reflect on this vast number—even supposing there were no more—of inhabitants of the watery element, without thinking of the little that mankind generally know of the variety of creatures by which the world of waters is peopled?

In the twelfth and thirteenth apartments is contained the collection of British birds and British shells, together with a small collection of birds' eggs. The ornithological department of the British Museum is, as a whole, worthy of the nation. Ornithologists have not been able, hitherto, to discover more than 4500 species of the feathered tribe, though, of course,

our knowledge on this subject is as yet but exceedingly limited, owing to vast tracts of Africa and Asia, especially China, being still unexplored by European ornithologists. Of the 4500 species of birds which are described and classified, the British Museum contains 2500 species, and the number is increasing every day. In regard to British birds, the collection in the Museum immeasurably surpasses that of any other institution in the world. Some men evince a very unbecoming disposition to depreciate every thing English, and to magnify the merits of every thing foreign. A namesake of my own, Dr. Grant, of the London University, represented, before a select committee of the House of Commons, in 1835, the whole natural history department of our national Museum as being in a most deplorable state, though the fact is manifestly the reverse; and Mr. Vigors, the member of Parliament for Carlow, stated before the same committee, that so deficient was the ornithological department of the Museum, that the collection of birds might easily be increased by two-thirds in the short space of

six months. The honourable gentleman forgets that, according to our present knowledge of ornithology, this would be an arithmetical impossibility; for, as already mentioned, the number of species known of the feathered creation is only 4500; while, at the time he made his extraordinary statement, the number of species contained in the British Museum was 2300!

In the department of shells there is a very great deficiency. The assortment is so limited, and possesses so little value, that one could almost wish it were not exhibited to the public. Many private individuals, curious in such matters, have collections four or five times more extensive and valuable. Mr. Bowerbank's amounts to 1200, and that of Mr. Wood, of Suffolk, to upwards of 1000.

Next comes the long gallery, one of the most magnificent rooms ever perhaps witnessed; its length is three hundred and sixty feet, and it is appropriated to the collections of minerals and secondary fossils. The objects in this apartment are at once numerous and

displayed to the best advantage. The collection is the most valuable and extensive in the world, and is daily increasing. The greater portion of the minerals was collected by the Right Honourable Charles Greville, and were bought, in 1810, from his family, for the sum of 13,797*l.*; that being the value at which they were estimated by a committee of the House of Commons, guided by the opinions and advice of several of the most distinguished mineralogists in Europe.

Returning to the grand entrance, you turn to the left, and proceed through a narrow and dark passage, or rather through several small apartments, filled with old books,—to the gallery of antiquities. Five rooms (the first four and the sixth) are occupied by Greek and Roman sculptures, which almost exclusively consist of those collected by the late Mr. Charles Townly, or which formed part of the museum of Sir Hans Sloane. Mr. Townly's most valuable collections were added to the Museum in 1805, having been that year purchased by Parliament for 20,000*l.* The collection was still further

enriched, in 1814, by a number of valuable antiquities, partly of the same class, which were ascertained to be in the Townly family, and for which the Legislature paid 8,200*l.* The fifth room is appropriated to Greek and Roman sculptured antiquities, of which there is a goodly number, of great interest and value. The seventh room contains British antiquities. The number of these is not great, being under twenty; but most of them are exceedingly curious. The eighth apartment is devoted to Egyptian antiquities. The articles in the ninth, or anteroom, which is up stairs, are few in number, and of a miscellaneous character, though all coming under the category of antiquities. The tenth room is devoted to bronzes, vases, gems, &c., all of which belonged to the celebrated Sir William Hamilton, for many years the British envoy at Naples. This collection, which is exceedingly valuable and varied, was added to the Museum so far back as 1772, having been then purchased from Sir William by Parliament, for the sum of 8,400*l.*

In the eleventh room there are about sixty

antiquities, many of them singularly curious, and all coming under the general designation of Greek and Roman sculptures. The same class of antiquities is contained in the twelfth room, chiefly forming a part of the collection of Sir William Hamilton. In the grand central room, which is the next apartment as the visiter proceeds in his examination, are various antiquities; but none of them are of a nature to require a special reference to them. Adjoining this apartment is the Egyptian Saloon, appropriated, as the name implies, to the exhibition of the antiquities of Egypt. It contains nearly two hundred fragments or memorials of that country, when renowned above all the other nations of the world for its learning, its science, and its knowledge of the arts. Amidst all these exceedingly curious objects, perhaps there is not one of less antiquity than two thousand five hundred years; while most of them were the productions of men who lived three or four thousand years ago. Many of the articles contained in this magnificent collection were recovered from the ravages of time by the French,

when Napoleon took possession of Egypt, and came into the possession of the English army on the capitulation of Alexandria in 1801. A considerable number belonged to the collection of the late Mr. Henry Salt, while others have been presented to the Museum at different times by various travellers.

The Phigalian Saloon next claims the visiter's attention. It is filled with a large and valuable collection of marble sculptures, the frieze of a temple whichhad been dug up at Phigaleia in Arcadia. They represent, in two sets, the combats between the Centaurs and the Lapithæ, and between the Greeks and the Amazons. They are generally supposed to have been executed under the eye of Phidias himself; and all are agreed that, if not executed under his own special superintendence, they are undoubtedly the genuine productions of his school. They were purchased, in 1815, by George the Fourth, then Prince Regent, and were by him given to the Museum. They cost that prince, in one way or other, very nearly 20,000*l.*

Next there is the Elgin Saloon, so named be-

cause it is the part of the Museum set apart for the famous collection of Greek sculpture made by Thomas Earl of Elgin. This is by far the most valuable and extensive collection of Grecian antiquities in the world. The number of articles is nearly four hundred. The collection was made by his lordship during the time he was ambassador at Constantinople. "It exhibits," to use the words of a writer who was well acquainted with the subject, "a great part of the exquisite sculptures that still remained in the Parthenon, or Temple of Minerva, in the Acropolis of Athens, which, if not brought away by his lordship, would indubitably have fallen into the hands of the French, or been wholly defaced by the barbarous indifference or superstitious prejudices of the Turks." For this splendid addition to the treasures of the British Museum, which was made in 1816, the sum of 35,000*l.* was voted by Parliament.

The Egyptian antiquities and Greek and Roman sculpture departments of the British Museum have been, and still are, of incalculable service to the interests of the fine arts in this

country. The genius of the Egyptians, of the Greeks, and of the Romans of a former period, lives in these remains of their productions which have been recovered from the ruins of those places which were their most celebrated seats of art and science; and they are exhibited as models for our artists. It is gratifying to find that our young artists, and amateurs also, duly appreciate the opportunities which are thus afforded them of cultivating a taste for the fine arts. Artists come from all parts of the country to take drawings of the beautiful specimens of sculpture with which the antiquities department of the Museum abounds. Not a day passes without fifteen or twenty persons being found engaged for hours in the way I have mentioned.

No man accustomed to reflection can look on the various memorials of remote ages, with which this part of the British Museum abounds, without a deep and hallowed interest. His thoughts at once go back to the eventful periods to which those memorials point. He is struck with the advanced state in which the kindred

arts of sculpture and architecture must have been in those days, compared with their state in this enlightened or "march-of-intellect" age. The Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans were immeasurably superior to us in all that appertains to the arts in question. Not only do we see innumerable traces of the highly cultivated minds of the architects and artists of those times, in the designs which everywhere, in this part of the Museum, meet our gaze; but, even in a mechanical point of view, we are mere pigmies compared with them; for supposing we possessed the same genius, or that our taste in these matters was equally cultivated with theirs, and that we were consequently capable of conceiving those designs which they carried into execution, we have not the implements by which we could execute such designs. We know of no implements which could make the slightest impression on those extremely hard stones on which they were wont to carve, with admirable taste, such an infinite variety of figures.

Fragments of Egyptian monuments sur-

round us while we stand in this room: the architects or scientific men of the present day know of no mechanical power by which the immense blocks of stone, of which these are parts, could have been raised in the air. This is, no doubt, mortifying to our vanity; but still the fact, we fear, must be admitted.

But the unbounded admiration with which we cannot help regarding the singularly cultivated taste of the ancients in sculpture and architecture, is not unmingled with feelings of regret that their minds should have been so deplorably debased in other respects. What could be more humiliating to the human mind, than to think that men whose attainments in the respects to which I have referred were so splendid, should yet have had such erroneous ideas on the most momentous of all matters—the matters, namely, which relate to the government of the world, and the great interests of futurity?

In this respect the Egyptians, and Greeks, and Romans, in the most brilliant eras of their history, were not a whit above the most

savage or the most ignorant heathen nations of the present day. Who can survey the ruins of the magnificent temples of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, or gaze on the fragments of their triumphs in the art of sculpture, which are scattered about in our national Museum, without feeling the deepest pain? Who can help blushing for poor human nature, when he recollects that the gifted individuals who could conceive and execute such designs, should be devout believers in all the absurdities of their preposterous mythology—should acknowledge from 30,000 to 40,000 gods—and should fall down and worship as deities, birds, beasts, onions, and almost every vegetable or inanimate object which crossed their path? Yet so it was. Such was, in their case, the results to which the light of nature, so much boasted of and magnified in the present day, conducted them. And so it now is, and so it ever will be, in every country and clime unblessed with the light of Revelation.

No one can look on the antiquities in the British Museum, without feeling a train of reflec-

tions arise in his mind as to the changes which have taken place in the world since the periods to which these antiquities point us back. I look on a block of stone richly carved with Egyptian hieroglyphics, and I think of the moral and political vicissitudes, which not only nations, but whole continents, have experienced since the hand that executed those figures was laid in the dust. I look on a fragment of exquisite sculpture, and I think of the numerous events of unutterable importance which have taken place since the heart of him who formed it ceased to beat. The most momentous of all the transactions the universe ever witnessed, the death of the Redeemer, is one of those events which have occurred since that time. What vast and mighty empires have since then crumbled into dust, leaving no trace of their fame, glory, and power! And nations, which were at that time sunk to the lowest depths of degradation, being not many removes in point of intelligence above the brute creation, are now the most civilized and powerful on the face of the earth. The Greek and Roman empires,

then so glorious and powerful, have for numerous ages been among the things that were; and France and Great Britain, then scarcely known among the countries of the earth, may now be said to be the mistresses of the world. And not only have new powers of great moral and political importance since that period started into existence, but we have now an entire world, (America,) then unknown and undreamed of. This, however, is a topic on which I must not dwell.

I have thus glanced at the leading departments into which the productions of nature and art contained in the British Museum are sectioned. We see in many of these productions of art remarkable proofs of human ingenuity; but how shall we express ourselves in speaking of the productions of nature, or rather of nature's God, with which the Museum so richly abounds! If the man of devout and intelligent mind cannot walk abroad among the fields—cannot survey inanimate creation, without, as Burns happily expresses it, looking "through nature up to nature's God," how

much more impossible were it to behold the vast variety of the Deity's animated works which are exhibited in our national Museum, without being lost in adoration of that Intelligent Power, by which they were called into being! What displays of divine wisdom, power, and goodness, are there made! Let the reader only fancy, what in the British Museum he would find to be matter of fact, that he is surrounded with fifty or sixty thousand different species of creatures, all fearfully and wonderfully made, and for every one of whose continued existence due provision was made by the same Providence who breathed into them the breath of life; let the reader only imagine this, and then say, whether the thought be not calculated to overpower every intelligent and virtuous mind. The more scientific and better informed a man is, the more will he see to admire in the structure of every creature before him. It is a touching and deeply affecting though delightful thought, that not one of those myriads of once living creatures were made in vain, any more than are the existing species

which they respectively represent. Each individual had a certain purpose to answer in the great economy of creation; a purpose which, in the vast majority of cases, is hidden from us in our present state, but which shall be fully revealed when the light of a brighter and better world has chased away the clouds and darkness of the present. It is gratifying to know, that if there are men sufficiently thoughtless and undevout as to look on the once animated treasures of the British Museum, without feeling one adoring thought ascend to the throne of the great Creator, and Preserver, and Governor of all, there are others who pay repeated visits to this noble institution for the special purpose of seeing and worshipping the Supreme Being through the medium of his works. Galen was converted from Atheism to Christianity by viewing the wonderful anatomy of the human frame. I cannot refer to individual instances of similar conversions by means of an inspection of the once living productions exhibited in the British Museum; but I do think it is no great stretch of fancy, or rather no stretch of fancy at all, to

suppose that instances of such conversions have taken place.

It is gratifying to know that the British Museum is yearly becoming an object of increased attention to the public. The number of persons that visited it in 1823, when a parliamentary report was published, was 153,000. In 1836, another parliamentary report was published, and the number that visited it in the previous year was, in round numbers, 250,000. I have not learned the number that visited it last year, but I am convinced it must have been close on 300,000, if, indeed, it was not greater. On the Monday of the week preceding the late coronation, the astonishing number of 10,000 paid a visit to the Museum. On Monday there is always a greater number of visiters than on any other day; a fact which is to be accounted for from the circumstance of two days intervening between the exhibitions of Friday and Monday, while, between the other days on which the institution is open, there is only an interval of one day. One of the officers has mentioned to me that the average number of

visiters per day is now about 2,500. This would give, for three days each week, 380,000 visiters per annum. The new arrangement made last year, extending the time for which the Museum is to be kept open for the public, from ten till seven during the summer months, instead of from ten till four, has tended considerably to increase the number of visiters. The taste for such exhibitions ought to be encouraged and extended, by every possible means, by the Legislature. They have a softening and ennobling effect on the minds of all who witness them. If the lower classes could only be made to become partial to such sights, every trace of their fondness for prize-fighting, or anything brutal or barbarous, would speedily be obliterated.

In conclusion, I have much pleasure in stating, that the administration of the affairs of the British Museum has undergone a very great improvement within the last two years. The mismanagement of its affairs, of which some years ago there were such just grounds of complaint, were principally to be ascribed to the

fact of many of the trustees never attending any of the meetings, or in any way discharging the duties of their office. The Parliamentary report of 1836, which gently hinted to such individuals that it would not be amiss if they were to resign and make way for noblemen and gentlemen who would make a principle of discharging the duties pertaining to the office of trustee, has had the best effect. Some have resigned, and others, who formerly paid little or no attention to the affairs of the institution, are now among the most active and efficient of its governors. A visible improvement has therefore, I repeat, taken place within the last two years. Every thing is now seen to the best advantage, and new objects of interest and value are being daily added to the collections in the various departments. If the Museum goes on at the same rapid rate of improvement which it has done for the last two years, it will in a very short time compete with any similar institution in Europe. This ought to be with us an object of national ambition; and it is to be hoped that the Government and the Legisla-

ture will enter into the matter with becoming spirit. An average annual grant of 15,000*l.* or 16,000*l.* (which is all that has been given for four years past,) for the purpose of adding to the treasures in the natural history department, is altogether unworthy of a great country. The amount ought to be at least 50,000*l.* The public money could not only not be applied to a better purpose, but no application of it would meet with a more general or cordial approval.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM—(CONTINUED).

The Reading-Room—Admission into it—Mode of procuring the Books applied for—Number of Readers in the Room—Remarks on their varied Pursuits and varied circumstances—Application to Literary Pursuits under the most discouraging circumstances—The Library—More liberal grants of public money to the Library department recommended.

It will have been inferred from the previous chapter, that there is not a better sight in London than the British Museum: indeed there are few places better worth seeing in the world. There is one department, however, of this institution of which the public hear but little, and which those who view the other departments never see: I allude to the Reading-room. It is situated at the eastern part of the building,

the entrance to which is through the gateway on the right hand side as you enter. It is within a few yards of the large room appropriated to the reception of the library of George the Fourth; which that monarch gave as a present to the trustees of the institution for the benefit of the public. The reading-room of the British Museum is, I should suppose from a glance of the eye, about sixty or seventy feet in length, about thirty in breadth, and about thirty in height. At the farthest end there is a wooden partition. The space beyond this partition is usually called the inner room; it is not half so large as the other, or first room.*

No person is admitted into the reading-room of the British Museum without the written recommendation of some respectable householder, who must be known by name, if not personally, to Sir Henry Ellis, the librarian, to whom the application for admission must be

* The Reading-room has been removed to another part of the building since this was written. It is now at the northern part of the edifice on the east side, and is entered from Montague Place. The size and appearance, however, of the new room very much resemble the former one.

made. Sir Henry, if he approve of the recommendation, which is understood to be a virtual, though not legal guarantee for the respectability of the candidate, signifies the same on a slip of paper to the under librarian, who is always in attendance in the room, and the applicant receives a ticket or printed card, containing the rules by which that part of the establishment is regulated.

This card insures his admission for six months. At the end of that time it will be renewed, on application to the under librarian to that effect; but very few of those who attend the Reading-room put themselves to this trouble, as when one is known as a reader, no questions are ever afterwards asked him, nor obstacles thrown in his way to the prosecution of his literary pursuits.

When a party wishes for any book, he has to write the title of it as given in the catalogue belonging to the room, and then append his name to the slip of paper. The object of the party's name being written after the title of the work he wishes to see, is to enable one of the officers

of the establishment, who chances to bring the book, to know to whom it is to be delivered. Without this there would be great and constant confusion. The officers who are usually in the reading-room, seldom bring the books applied for, but hand the slips to others in different parts of the various library rooms; and the latter, when they have found the book asked for, give it with the slip of paper to some other servant, who carries it himself, or gives it to some one else to carry with the slip of paper in it, to the party who applied for it. The name of the party being written on the slip, enables the officer who brings the book to find out the proper person at once.

The library, consisting as it does of nearly 250,000 volumes, besides 24,000 manuscript works, necessarily occupies many rooms. When a book, which is seldom sought for, is inquired after by any party—and such works are usually in the more distant rooms—it often requires some time to get it. In the case of very rare books, half an hour has elapsed in one or two instances, in my own case, before the work

written for has been brought me. These, however, are cases which very seldom occur. Generally five or ten minutes suffice. I need not say that where there are so many volumes as I have mentioned, the reading-room can only contain a very small portion of the library. Perhaps 8,000 or 9,000 volumes may be contained in it. They are all books which are most frequently sought for. All the popular periodicals, encyclopædias, gazetteers, biographical works, histories, parliamentary documents, transactions of learned and philosophical societies, &c. are to be found in the reading-room; and as a great many of them are accessible to the readers, they can take them themselves without writing for them, or asking them through the medium of any of the officers of the establishment.

The officers of this department of the institution are all exceedingly obliging in their demeanor, and always ready to meet the views of the readers. They are also intelligent; and are often of great service in directing the parties to books, when they know the subjects which are occupying their attention at the time, which

will forward their views, and with which they were themselves before unacquainted. Nothing, indeed, could be better regulated than the reading-room of the British Museum.

The number of individuals whose names are on Sir Henry Ellis's list, is nearly 6,000. I recollect hearing Sir Henry mention this about two years ago, when an acquaintance of my own was applying for admission. The immense majority of this number, however, only occasionally visit the reading-room; some only at intervals of two, three, four, five, or six months. It can hardly be necessary to say, that were even half the number to go at once, there is not a room in Christendom that would contain them; not certainly in a sitting or reading posture, with tables on which to lay the books they are reading, or the paper on which they are writing. I should suppose that the average number of persons who are to be seen in the reading-room of the British Museum, is under one hundred, and that from three to four hundred is the number who visit it in quest of particular books, in the course of a day. I should say that there is

not accommodation for above one hundred and thirty persons in the room, even with every economy of the space. The average number of books asked for a-day is ascertained to be about five hundred; but there are many individuals who ask for two, three, four, and sometimes a greater number of books.

In the reading-room of the British Museum, are often to be seen many of the most distinguished literary characters of the day. Campbell and Moore, and the late Mr. Godwin, with others of the most popular authors of the age, have repeatedly met together, without any previous concert, in that interesting locality. Perhaps it may be said with truth, that there are few men of distinction in modern literature who have not gone with greater or less frequency to it, to prosecute their intellectual pursuits. I have seen many individuals of eminence there on repeated occasions; and I doubt not there were others of distinction present at the time, though personally unknown to me. There are some of our modern literati who have been unremitting in their attendance in the reading-

room for nearly a quarter of a century. It was stated in 1836, before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, that Mr. Hallam, the celebrated author of "The Middle Ages," had been a regular attendant for nearly that length of time.

The proportion of ladies to gentlemen, who are in the habit of frequenting the reading-room of the British Museum, is exceedingly small. I should say, that on an average there is not above one lady for forty individuals of the opposite sex. I do not remember to have ever seen more than five or six ladies present at once.

The reading-room of the British Museum has been fitly compared to a literary workshop. Perhaps the phrase, "literary manufactory," would be still more expressive. In it are to be seen persons engaged in every variety of literary occupation. There is not a field of science or literature that cannot boast of its industrious cultivator there. I have often been struck with the variety of subjects embraced under the general term literature, when seeing the books which lay on the tables before me. In fact, I

had scarcely before supposed there were so many different branches of human knowledge. And yet every one was cultivating his own particular department, with as much assiduity and enthusiasm, as if it were the only department to occupy the human intellect. It has often occurred to me as an interesting reflection, to think of the great number of works, on every variety of subject, which are always going on in the limited space of that room. Every one is busy with his own work: his attention is entirely absorbed by it. He never passes a thought on other persons, or the topics with which they are engaged. Individuals may indeed be, and there are many who often are, in that room, who for hours together are all but unconscious that there are any other persons present but themselves. And yet all this while there are perhaps a hundred other individuals in the place, pursuing, with greater or less eagerness, their various objects. Works, as already mentioned, are thus at all times "progressing," as the Americans say, in every department of human knowledge. Let any one

try how many branches of learning he can call up to his mind, and then let him fancy he sees some individual most assiduously applying himself to the production of some work or other bearing on such branch of learning, and he will be able to form some idea of the varied occupations of those who frequent the reading-room of the British Museum.

Notwithstanding the variety of literary pursuits which are followed by the frequenters of this room, and the number of persons usually present, the most perfect quietness and order prevail. So great, indeed, is the silence which usually reigns in the place, that one may prosecute any subject requiring close thought with nearly as much advantage as if he were shut up in an apartment by himself. There is scarcely any speaking, under any circumstances; and when one individual does utter a word or two to another, it is always in a whisper. The only sort of noise, worthy of the name, which ever occurs, is caused by the occasional incautious moving of a chair, or the accidental falling of a book; but before one has been in the

habit of attending the place any length of time, his ear gets sufficiently accustomed to this, to become almost unconscious of it. I know many who are so wrapt up in abstract contemplation, or who are so eagerly engaged in the application of all the powers of their minds to particular subjects, that they are altogether unconscious of any such external noise.

What has often grieved me to think is, that there should be so many persons of cultivated taste, all applying the undivided energies of their minds to the production of a work on some particular subject; and yet that, after doing this for many months, in some cases for years, their labour and their talents should all go for nothing. The work, when it does appear, brings them neither reputation nor profit. It may never be heard of beyond the limited circle of their own personal acquaintances; it falls still-born from the press. Such is the ill-timed destiny of innumerable authors. He whose fate it is, must indeed have strong nerves if it do not give a severe shake to his mental constitution. I can conceive of nothing more trying

to a susceptible mind—and the minds of authors are generally so—than that a work which had incessantly occupied one's thoughts for years, and in the preparation of which he had been for years constantly employed, should not on its appearance excite the slightest interest. The mortification in such a case is more severe, the disappointment more bitter, because the author had fondly hoped it would excite a sensation in the world on its publication; for this is a feeling which is, I believe, shared to a greater or less extent by every literary man engaged in laborious works. Severe criticism has killed many an author. Henry Kirke White and John Keats are not the only persons who have fallen victims in modern times to a heartless and unjust system of criticism, though their names may be those most generally known in this respect. As, then, every one who knows any thing of the feelings of an author must be aware, that utter neglect is far more trying to the nerves than severity of criticism, the assumption is a justifiable one, that many unfortunate authors, though their names are

unknown to us, have had their hearts completely broken, and have eventually dropped into their graves, in consequence of the utter frustration of all their hopes, the dispersion of all their fond imaginings, caused by their works falling still-born from the press. Instances consist with my own personal knowledge, of authors having felt so keenly the failure of works which only cost them a few months' labour in the preparation, that they have never afterwards ventured to look their literary friends in the face, but have as carefully kept out of their way as if they had committed some crime of serious magnitude against society. How great then must be the shock which the person's mind receives whose work, in the production of which years of his life have been spent, falls into oblivion the very hour in which it has been published! If such a case could be aggravated, it would be in those instances, unhappily too numerous, in which all an author's pecuniary prospects have been blasted by the fate of his book.

This train of reflection has often suggested

itself to my mind when I have thought of the literary men I have witnessed writing away for years without the intermission, perhaps, of a day, in the reading-room of the British Museum, from its opening to its close, in the preparation of some laborious work. I have thought of the probable fate in reserve for their labours, and of the heart-sickness, if happily nothing worse, consequent on that unlucky fate.

It is Sterne, I think, who gives a graphic description of the care-worn expression of countenance and pale complexion of the literary student. Poets and novelists have all given vivid portraitures of the pale and emaciated personal appearance of the man who applies his whole soul to intellectual pursuits. There are living originals occasionally to be seen in the reading-room of the British Museum, which surpass any mere portrait of the poet or novelist. The elder D'Israeli, in his "Calamities of Genius," refers to a striking instance of the kind, which came under his own notice. Though not in the habit of quoting from other authors, my object being, in most of my works, to give

information which is nowhere else to be had, the case narrated by D'Israeli so forcibly illustrates what I have said above, that I am induced to give it.

"My acquaintance," says that writer, "with an unfortunate lady of the name of Eliza Ryves was casual and interrupted; yet I witnessed the bitterness of hope deferred, which maketh the heart sick! She sank by the slow wastings of grief into a grave, which probably does not record the name of its martyr of literature.

"She was descended from a family of distinction in Ireland; but, as she expressed it, 'she had been deprived of her birth-right by the chicanery of law.' In her former hours of tranquillity she had published some elegant odes, had written a tragedy, and comedies; all which remained in manuscript. In her distress, she looked to her pen as the source of subsistence; and an elegant genius, and a woman of polished manners, commenced the life of a female trader in literature.

"Conceive the repulses of a modest and delicate woman in her attempts of appreciating

the value of a manuscript with its purchaser. She had frequently returned from the booksellers to her dreadful solitude to hasten to her bed, in all the bodily pains of misery—she has sought in uneasy slumbers a temporary forgetfulness of griefs, which were to recur on the morrow.

"Elegant literature is always of doubtful acceptance with the public, and Eliza Ryves came at last to try the most masculine exertions of her pen. She wrote for one newspaper much political matter; but the proprietor was too great a politician for the writer of politics, for he only praised the labour he never paid:—much poetry for another, in which, being one of the correspondents of Delta Crutca, in payment of her verses she got nothing but verses. The most astonishing exertion for a female pen was the entire composition of the historical and political portion of some Annual Register. So little profitable were all these laborious and original efforts, that every day did not bring its 'daily bread.' Yet, even in her poverty, her native benevolence could make her generous;

for she has deprived herself of her meal, to assist an unhappy one who lodged above her.

"Advised to adopt the mode of translation, and being ignorant of the French language, she retired to an obscure lodging at Islington, which she never quitted till she had produced a good version of Rousseau's 'Social Compact,' Raynal's 'Letter to the National Assembly,' and finally, translated De la Croix's 'Review of the Constitutions of the Principal States in Europe,' in two large volumes, with intelligent notes. All these works, so much at variance with her taste, left her health much broken, and a mind which might be said to have nearly survived the body.

"Yet, even at a moment so unfavourable, her ardent spirit engaged in a translation of Froissart. At the British Museum I have seen her conning over the magnificent and voluminous manuscript of the old chronicler, and by its side Lord Berners' version, printed in the reign of Henry VIII. It was evident that his lordship was a spy on Froissart, to inform her of what was going forward in the French

camp; and she soon perceived, for her taste was delicate, that it required an ancient lord and knight, with all his antiquity of phrase, to break a lance with the still more ancient chivalric Frenchman. The familiar elegance of modern style failed to preserve the picturesque touches, and the native graces of the chronicler, who wrote as the mailed knight combatted—roughly or gracefully, as suited the tilt or the field. She veiled to Lord Berners, while she felt it was here necessary to understand old French, and then to write in good English. During these profitless labours hope seemed to be whispering in her lonely study. Her comedies had been in the possession of the managers of the theatres during several years. They had too much merit to be rejected, perhaps too little to be acted. Year passed over year, and the last still repeated the treacherous promise of its brother. The mysterious arts of procrastination are by no one so well systematised as by the theatrical manager, nor its secret sorrows so deeply felt as by the dramatist. One of her comedies, 'The Debt of Honour,' had been

warmly approved at both theatres, where probably a copy of it may be still found. To the honour of one of the managers, he presented her with a hundred pounds on his acceptance of it. Could she avoid then flattering herself with an annual harvest?

"But even this generous gift, which involved in it such golden promises, could not for ten years preserve its delusion. 'I feel,' said Eliza Ryves, 'the necessity of some powerful patronage to bring my comedies forward to the world with *eclat*, and secure them an admiration which, should it even be deserved, is seldom bestowed, unless some leading judge of literary merit gives the sanction of his applause; and then the world will chime in with his opinion, without taking the trouble to inform themselves whether it be founded in justice or partiality.

"The character of Eliza Ryves was rather tender and melancholy than brilliant and gay, and, like her bruised fortune, breathing sweetness when broken into pieces. She traced her sorrows in a work of fancy, when her feelings

were at least as active as her imagination. It is a small volume, entitled, 'The Hermit of Snowdon,' a tale formed on a very delicate, but uncommon act of the mind of fastidious refinement. Albert, having felt, when opulent and fashionable, a passion for Lavinia, meets the kindest return; but, having imbibed an ill opinion of women, from his licentious connexions, he conceived they were slaves of passion or of avarice. He wrongs the generous nature of Lavinia by suspecting her of mercenary views; hence arise the perplexities of the hearts of both. Albert affects to be ruined, and spreads the report of an advantageous match. Lavinia feels all the delicacy of her situation; she loves —but 'never told her love.' She seeks for her existence in her literary labours, and perishes in want.

"In her character of Lavinia, the authoress, with all the melancholy sagacity of genius, foresaw and has described her own death! The dreadful solitude to which she was latterly condemned, when in the last stage of her poverty; her frugal mode of life, her acute sensibility,

her defrauded hopes, and her exalted fortitude. She has here formed a register of all that occurred in her solitary existence. I will give one scene—to me it is pathetic, for it is like a scene at which I was present.

"Lavinia's lodgings were about two miles from town, in an obscure situation. I was shown up to a mean apartment where Lavinia was sitting at work, and in a dress which indicated the greatest economy. I inquired what success she had met with in her dramatic pursuits. She waved her head, and, with a melancholy smile replied, 'that her hopes of ever bringing any piece on the stage were now entirely over; for she found that more interest was necessary for the purpose than she could command, and that she had for that reason laid aside her comedy for ever.' While she was talking, there came in a favourite dog of Lavinia's, which I had used to caress. The creature sprang to my arms, and I received him with my usual fondness. Lavinia endeavoured to conceal a tear which trickled down her cheek. Afterwards she said, 'Now that I live entirely

alone, I show Juno more attention than I had used to do formerly. *The heart wants something to be kind to.* And it consoles us for the loss of society to see even an animal derive happiness from the endearments we bestow upon it.' "

D'Israeli adds, that this unfortunate young lady died soon after writing the above passage. I have given her case because it is an everyday one, though the world seems to be little aware of the fact. Those only whose pursuits have led them into an extensive intercourse with such as live by their literary labour, can have any conception of the disappointed expectations, the heart-sickness of hope deferred, the physical destitution, and the broken spirits, which arise from the rejection of authors' works on the part of publishers, or the neglect of the public, should their works ever see the light. Instances of this kind are numerous in the history of the reading-room of the British Museum.

I could give in detail several other instances of a similar nature; but in cases where the

parties are alive, it would be improper to make even a general reference to them.

It is curious to witness the enthusiasm which some literary men display in expounding and defending some wild theory, which even were it a sound one, could be of no practical utility whatever. But the more wild and visionary an hypothesis is, it will generally be found that its votaries are the more thoroughly convinced of its truth, and the more zealous in its defence. The reading-room of the British Museum has seen many martyrs to an enthusiasm in favour of extravagant theories, which, even had they been sound, could have been of no practical advantage to philosophy, science, or society. I may mention one instance of this kind. I allude to the case of the late Henry O'Brien, author of a work on the "Round Towers of Ireland." That clever and learned, though visionary young man, was seized with a very extraordinary crotchet respecting the origin of the round towers of his native country, and, with the view of establishing his hypothesis, he applied himself with a consuming anxiety

and application of mind, to the perusal of works on the subject in the British Museum. Before his labours were finished, it was seen by those who knew him that his incessant application to literary pursuits, in conjunction with his enthusiasm in favour of his peculiar notions on the subject just mentioned, was undermining his physical constitution. He lived to see his book, developing and defending his theory, published; but he did not long survive. His premature end was most probably accelerated by the very harsh manner in which his work and himself personally were treated by the critics, coupled with the fact of its having, notwithstanding all the labour he had expended on it, met with no sale worthy of the name.

I have known others, again, waste years of their time in incessant application to literary research in the British Museum, and yet never succeed in meeting with a publisher to bring before the world the results of all this amount of labour; while their own means would not admit of their publishing the book on their own account. I doubt not that there are many

valuable works which are for ever lost to the world from these causes. Such individuals, in the majority of cases, have either fallen eventual victims to their disappointments, or they have entirely abjured literary pursuits, except, merely, perhaps, as an occasional source of recreation.

I have been surprised, on the other hand, at witnessing the fortitude with which some literary characters have borne up under repeated and severe disappointments in their endeavours to acquire for themselves a prominent place in the republic of letters. And what is worthy of mention is, that, so far as my own personal observation goes, I have seen much more of this moral fortitude, this hoping against hope, exhibited by females, than by those of our own sex.

I know one who has spent years of her existence in the production of a work, and who used to be seen constantly in the reading-room of the British Museum, living on little better than chameleon's fare, that she might indulge her passion for book-writing; and yet, though her book has been finished for two years, and

she has, through the intervention of literary friends of distinction, tried every publisher in London, with the view of getting it out, without success,—she still clings to the confident hope that it will by-and-bye be brought before the world and meet with the most signal success. Dr. Johnson, or somebody else, once said, that half the blessedness of life, even as regards the present world, springs from hopes which are not destined to be ever realised. This, I am satisfied, having seen the manuscript, is a hope which will never be realised. Still, as the delusion is a pleasing one, and is likely to be as lasting as the lady's existence, it were a piece of gratuitous cruelty to try to undeceive her. She once mentioned to me, that the most celebrated phrenologist of the present day—she is herself a phrenologist—told her on one occasion, after having examined her cerebral development, that the organ of hope was so large that it was worth at least 500*l.* a-year to her. As she has not a fourth of that sum in what commercial men call hard cash, it is a very fortunate circumstance for her that she possesses this very

handsome annual income in the shape of a particular craniological development.

I used often to meet with another—one of our own sex—who was blessed with an equally-abundant supply of the commodity of hope. There was, however, this difference between the two, that while the lady was a person of great talents and a most cultivated mind, the other could lay no admissible claim to either. Having the advantage of some money, and not meeting with any one who would undertake the publication of his works; which, I should state, were all compilations, the result of very hard labour though very badly executed,—he became his own publisher. But, alas! the books, though published, never sold. One after another fell still-born from the press. Still he persevered for years, compiling, printing, and publishing, boldly maintaining that the reason why his works did not sell was, that their merits were too great to be at once appreciated. He tenaciously, however, clung to the conviction that "full justice would be one day done him," and everlastingly quoted the case of Milton's "Para-

dise Lost," as one precisely similar to what his own would turn out to be. "One morn," some months ago, "I missed him on the accustomed hill," and have not seen or heard of him since; whether he had squandered away all his money in paper, printing, and advertising, and found his hopes vanish as his cash disappeared, I have not the means of knowing; though I think the hypothesis an exceedingly probable one.

Little do the readers of works requiring research know what amount of labour is sometimes required before the authors have succeeded in ascertaining or clearing up a certain point. There are instances on record in the history of the reading-room of the British Museum, in which literary men have spent a whole week in the search after some particular fact, or admissible authority for some fact, and yet have not found it, after all. I myself know linguists who have spent several successive days in that room, in tracing out the root whence some particular word has been derived. People talk of manual labour: it is not half so exhausting or oppressive as this. West India slavery, I am assured by

some literary men, could never, even in its worst state, have been at all comparable with this species of mental exertion. To the reader all appears smooth and easy: could he only form an adequate idea of the anxiety and exhausting effort it cost the poor writer to hunt out, to use a sporting phrase, some of the matter which the book contains, authors would receive a greater share of popular favour than they sometimes do.

Perhaps there is no portion of the public money which is better appropriated than that which is devoted to the support of the British Museum, considered as a general institution. That part of the sum annually voted by the House of Commons to defray the expenses of the reading-room and library, is applied with peculiar advantage to the public. The utility of this part of the institution is singularly great. The extent of it may be best estimated by trying to form some idea in one's own mind as to what would be the injury to British literature and British statistics of a practical kind, which would ensue from its destruction. The precaution taken against any calamity of this nature by means of fire, by re-

fusing ever to let light of any kind, or under any pretext, into it, is deserving of all praise; and it is one which, it is to be hoped, will never cease to be taken. To have the place open from nine o'clock in the morning to four in the afternoon all the year round, and from nine in the morning to seven in the evening in the months of May, June, July, and August, is surely affording opportunity enough to the great body of literary men to prosecute their various inquiries; and if there be some persons whose convenience, owing to their other avocations, those hours do not suit, why then, all that can be said on the subject is, that the convenience of a few individuals must give way to the general good.

I have already stated that the British Museum was instituted in 1753. The library, like most of the other departments of the institution, had its commencement in the acquisition of an extensive collection of manuscripts and printed works which belonged to Sir Hans Sloane; to a suggestion in whose will the origin of the Museum is to be ascribed. From its

institution up to the present time, it has been regularly increasing its stores of manuscripts and printed books. The principal source whence it receives its constant additions to its collection, is that of the privilege it has of demanding a copy of every new work published in the United Kingdom. This privilege was conferred on it in 1767, a few years after its institution, by George the Second, on which occasion that monarch presented the magnificent gift of the library of the Kings of England, which included the libraries of Henry Prince of Wales, Archbishop Cranmer, and other distinguished individuals.

Since that period, the library of the British Museum has been enriched by various gifts of splendid collections of works. In 1763, George the Third made it a present of a large collection of pamphlets and public papers, published during the eventful years which intervened between 1640 and 1660; which collection had been commenced by Charles the First. To the gift of the library of George the Third, consisting of 90,000 volumes, made to the Museum in

1823, I have already referred. Besides these large presents, a great many literary men have left their valuable, though much less extensive, libraries to it. The number of books purchased by the trustees is inconsiderable, compared with the number which have been derived from the sources I have mentioned. In only a few cases have private libraries been purchased. Until within the last few years the average annual amount of money expended on books for the British Museum did not exceed 200*l.*; within five or six years it has been about 1000*l.* This parsimony in the purchase of books for such an institution as the British Museum, is unworthy of this great nation.

An impression is pretty generally entertained that the library of the British Museum is the most extensive and valuable extant. I wish, for the honour of the country, the impression were a correct one; unfortunately, however, it is not so. There are no fewer than nine* libra-

* In this number I do not include the library of the Vatican at Rome, there being so many conflicting statements as to its extent. This difference of opinion arises from the non-exist-

ries in Europe more valuable and extensive than the national library of Great Britain. The King's Library, in Paris, by far the largest in the world, contains the immense number of 700,000 volumes. Even the Library of Munich, a place of which one seldom hears, can boast of its 500,000 volumes. What may appear still more surprising, Russia, barbarous and despotic as that country always has been, has its 400,000 volumes in the national library at St. Petersburgh. Copenhagen, too, has an equally extensive library. Vienna estimates the number of volumes in its library at 350,000; while Naples, Dresden, and Gottingen, severally lay claim to 300,000 volumes. Lastly, there is Berlin, with its 250,000 volumes; while the British Museum can boast of no more than 240,000 volumes.

This is not as it ought to be: it is discreditable to Great Britain that any other country, especially countries so far behind us in civilization, literature, population, and wealth, should

ence of a catalogue. I think, however, there can be little question that the library of the Vatican is as extensive as that of the British Museum.

so far surpass us in the article of a national library. Where, it will be asked, does the blame rest? It rests in two quarters; first, with the House of Commons, and, secondly, with the trustees of the Museum. The House of Commons has always been most illiberal in its votes of money to enrich the contents of the Museum generally; while the trustees have somehow or other evinced a desire to expend the money so voted in the purchase of antiquities, curiosities, objects in natural history, &c., in preference to increasing the library. This is deeply to be regretted; for the library is undoubtedly to be regarded as by far the most important department of the institution. I have reason, however, to believe that cause for this regret will not exist much longer. If I am not mistaken, the legislature will henceforth be much more liberal in its votes of money for the general interests of the Museum, and that a fair share of the money thus voted will be expended in the purchase of valuable additions to the library. This is the only way in which we can ever hope to rival the other leading

European libraries. They are severally supported by large sums of money granted by the governments of the various countries; and consequently have been enabled, even in cases where the libraries were instituted long posterior to that of the British Museum, so far to surpass us in the extent, variety, and value of their literary collections. At present we are only adding to the library of the British Museum at the rate of from 4000 to 5000 volumes a-year, while some of the libraries to which I refer are receiving annual additions to the extent of from 20,000 to 25,000 volumes.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NEWSMEN.

Their supposed Number—The Arduousness and Nature of their Duties—Their Uproarious Disposition—The Expedition with which they Deliver the Newspapers—The rough Reception they often meet with from their Customers—Their Evening Duties—Their great Usefulness, and the Claims they have on the Public Consideration.

THERE is one class of persons in the metropolitan community, which, so far as I am aware, exists nowhere else; certainly not in Great Britain. They are a body of individuals of whom every one has heard, but of whom very few persons know any thing. My reference is to the Newsmen. The Newsmen are a class of persons through whom all the newspapers published in the metropolis are put, in the first instance, into circulation. They are a most in-

dustrious body of individuals, and contribute very largely to the enjoyments of the entire population of the empire.

The Newsmen are, as far as can be ascertained, about five hundred in number. Most of them have one or more boys in their employ; and those whose business is not sufficiently extensive to enable them to employ boys, are often obliged to call in the aid of their wives—always, of course, assuming they have wives—in the delivery of the papers. The Newsmen purchase all their papers, either direct at the offices of the different journals, or at one of the three or four wholesale houses which exist in their own trade. The Newsmen get all the papers for which they charge their customers five-pence, for four-pence;—one penny on each paper being thus all that they have to maintain themselves, after paying the expenses consequent on their business, and running the risk of bad debts. It will be seen from this that the proprietors of London newspapers do not, like those of the provinces, get the prices marked on them, and at which they are sold to the

readers, but that one penny is deducted from the amount. They are not, however, on a more unfavourable footing than the proprietors of provincial papers on this account; they give no credit, and consequently are not subject to bad debts. Between the long credits given in the provinces, and the bad debts to which the proprietors of papers are there subjected, they would not be in a worse position were they put on the same footing as the proprietors of London newspapers.

Perhaps there are few callings in London more arduous than that of the Newsmen. They usually rise at five o'clock in the morning at all seasons of the year, and in all sorts of weather. This is necessary in order that they may deliver morning papers in sufficient time to their customers. A little before six they begin to muster strong at the offices of the various morning journals. And a more uproarious or merry set of persons, notwithstanding all their hard trudging through town, is nowhere to be found. They are all alive, or, as Mr. O'Connell would say, all "agitation," from the time they

some literary men, could never, even in its worst state, have been at all comparable with this species of mental exertion. To the reader all appears smooth and easy: could he only form an adequate idea of the anxiety and exhausting effort it cost the poor writer to hunt out, to use a sporting phrase, some of the matter which the book contains, authors would receive a greater share of popular favour than they sometimes do.

Perhaps there is no portion of the public money which is better appropriated than that which is devoted to the support of the British Museum, considered as a general institution. That part of the sum annually voted by the House of Commons to defray the expenses of the reading-room and library, is applied with peculiar advantage to the public. The utility of this part of the institution is singularly great. The extent of it may be best estimated by trying to form some idea in one's own mind as to what would be the injury to British literature and British statistics of a practical kind, which would ensue from its destruction. The precaution taken against any calamity of this nature by means of fire, by re-

fusing ever to let light of any kind, or under any pretext, into it, is deserving of all praise; and it is one which, it is to be hoped, will never cease to be taken. To have the place open from nine o'clock in the morning to four in the afternoon all the year round, and from nine in the morning to seven in the evening in the months of May, June, July, and August, is surely affording opportunity enough to the great body of literary men to prosecute their various inquiries; and if there be some persons whose convenience, owing to their other avocations, those hours do not suit, why then, all that can be said on the subject is, that the convenience of a few individuals must give way to the general good.

I have already stated that the British Museum was instituted in 1753. The library, like most of the other departments of the institution, had its commencement in the acquisition of an extensive collection of manuscripts and printed works which belonged to Sir Hans Sloane; to a suggestion in whose will the origin of the Museum is to be ascribed. From its

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to be only commencing. As soon as they have taken a hurried snatch of breakfast, they begin to deliver papers to parties who are not subscribers, but who merely pay a penny for an hour of a particular journal, that journal being then returned to the Newsman. The poor Newsman, either himself or by some of his boys, delivers this paper at a house, it may be some considerable distance from where he himself resides, and then calls for it again after the hour has expired; and all, as the showmen say, "for the small charge of one penny." The paper thus got from one reader is given for the same "small charge" and for the same period of time, to another; the industrious Newsman delivering it and again calling for it when the hour has expired. The same process is repeated perhaps from eight o'clock in the morning to three or four in the afternoon,—thus keeping the Newsman constantly on foot. But to form any idea of the amount of labour which a Newsman undergoes in attending to this department of his business, it will be necessary to inform the reader, that he has perhaps thirty or

forty papers in circulation in this way at the same time; each of which papers must be transferred at the proper time from the residence of one reader to that of another. I believe that, in many cases, a Newsman or his boy will call at from seventy to eighty houses in this way, before four o'clock. I knew one boy who was in the habit, day after day, of calling at no fewer than one hundred and twenty places before that hour, to transfer the morning papers from one reader to another. It is but right, however, to state, that in this case the residences were less widely scattered than usual, otherwise it would have been impossible for any pair of human legs extant, to have accomplished the task.

I have mentioned an hour as the time the readers, to whom I have referred, keep the papers. That is usually the time; but agreements are often entered into between gentlemen and the Newsmen for a longer use of the journals. This is, perhaps, the most profitable part of the Newsmen's business. But for the money they obtain in this way, very few of them would

get the thing to answer at all. The papers, after being thus read by a number of persons, are sent by that evening's post to the subscribers in the country, generally at the reduced price of fourpence. Formerly, when the price of a newspaper was sevenpence, twopence were deducted from the price paid by country subscribers for papers which were thus read in London; and as the papers are always kept clean, and persons in the country receive them at precisely the same time as if they had been put into the post-office the moment they come out of the hands of the printer, of course their being read in London makes no difference.

The laboriousness of this part of a Newsman's duties, considered only in reference to the extent of ground over which he has to go in a given time, will at once be seen to be sufficiently great. But bad as it is, it is not the worst circumstance in his lot. If there be an individual in Christendom who is entitled, in a special manner, to speak as one having authority touching the impossibility of pleasing everybody, it is the hapless vendor of the broad

sheet. He calls for the paper at the expiration of the time allowed one gentleman for reading it: the gentleman is of indolent, easy habits, and has not perhaps opened it, and all the proofs in the world will not persuade him that he has yet had it half his regular time. He then takes it up to read its contents, telling the Newsman or Newsman's boy, either to wait in the kitchen till he has done, or call again. Another gentleman is a downright Tory, and he is in the middle of a speech, of three or four columns' length, of Lord Lyndhurst or Sir Robert Peel; the Newsman might as soon ask him for his purse, as ask him for the paper before he has finished reading the Tory oration. A third reader is a Liberal; and Lord Melbourne or Lord John Russell has brought a bill into either of the Houses, as the case chances to be, for the Municipal Corporation Reform in Ireland, or for the Abolition of Church Rates in England. A lengthened debate very naturally ensues thereon: the *Liberal* reader could no more think of parting with the paper than he could with the coat on his back, until he

sees under what monstrous pretext the Tories can have the assurance to object to a measure so demonstrably beneficial in its tendency. A message is again sent up-stairs by the Newsman, that the time is up and that he cannot wait any longer, as the paper has to be read by other gentlemen. The party orders the servant out of the room, and very likely calls her, if a female, a hussey into the bargain: if a male servant, he is threatened with a breakage of his bones if he do not get down stairs directly. The servant, whether male or female, goes down and reproaches the ill-fated Newsman with being the cause of putting "master" in a passion, and getting "people" into trouble: the Newsman replies, in self-defence, that he shall find himself "in trouble" with the next customer he has to go to, and that he *must* have the paper. An angry altercation takes place betwixt him and the servant, the latter peremptorily refusing to go up stairs again and make "master" worse.

While this squabble is going on, "master" comes and throws the paper down stairs, grow-

ling out, "Here, give it him." The servant takes the journal, which was the innocent cause of all this bickering and ill-blood, pokes it into the Newsman's hand, and slams the door in his face. He proceeds to the next reader. The latter knew that a debate on a particular subject, in which he felt a deep interest, was expected to come on the previous night; or whether it was so or not, he can no more live without his broad sheet at the usual hour in the morning, than he could, with any comfort to himself, without his breakfast. Not a minute has elapsed beyond the usual time for receiving the journal he patronises, before he rings the bell and asks Sally whether the Newsman has arrived. Sally, especially if the gentleman be a bachelor, simpers out in her most pleasant manner, "I'se not a-seen him yet, sir."

"Oh! he's a lazy dog: Sally, be sure you bring me up the paper the moment it arrives."

"I will, sir," answers the latter, making her exit and shutting the door behind her.

"It's very provoking that the rascal should be so much beyond his proper time," mutters

the gentleman to himself, taking a chair and advancing towards the fire, if in the winter season; if in the summer season, seating himself on the sofa. A few minutes more expire, which the gentleman magnifies into so many hours. He rings the bell again with redoubled violence. Her maidship quits the kitchen in, as she herself would say, "less than no time," and bounds up stairs. "No appearance of that fellow of a Newsman yet, Sally?" growls the former, taking three or four hasty steps through the room.

"No, sir, he aint a-come yet."

"Just look out at the door, and see if he be coming."

"I will, sir."

And down stairs Sally trips, with all due expedition, in order to ascertain whether the poor Newsman may be descried from the street-door; but just as she is putting her fingers to the latchet to open it, a sudden and smart pull of the bell causes so violent a clanging in her ears that, taken quite by surprise and *half* frightened to boot, she puts her hand to her breast, and, as if almost suffocated, mutters

out—"A mercy on us! what's that?" The surprise and the fright, however, are only momentary: they have disappeared long before the bell has ceased to ring, and opening the door, she looks ominously at the Newsman, and, as she takes the paper out of his hand, observes, in her own peculiar way, "Oh, master is in *such* a rage at your being so late."

"I can't help it: it's not my fault," says the poor Newsman, in self-defence, literally gasping for breath, owing to his having run all the way from his last customer's residence.

"Oh, master don't care whose fault it is; he is *so* angry."

"I'm very sorry, but the fault——"

"I tell you what it is, sir," shouts a gruff voice from the first landing, before the hapless Newsman could finish his exculpatory sentence, "I tell you what it is, sir, if you can't bring the paper at the proper time I must employ some other person who will: that's all."

"Master," recognizing the Newsman's ring, had reached the top of the first pair of stairs in

time to interrupt the dialogue between Sally and the vender of the broad sheet.

"I assure you, sir, that if——"

The Newsman renews his effort to explain in the best way he can the cause of the delay, but is interrupted again by his cross and crusty customer telling him that he will hear no excuse, but that if he is even a moment past his time again he need not bring the paper at all.

Incidents of this kind are matters of daily occurrence in the Newsman's eventful life. Very often, indeed, such incidents repeatedly occur in one day; for if the first or second of the readers detain the paper beyond the usual time, all who follow insist that they shall severally have out their allowed time, without reference to the time at which they got it.

When this portion of the Newsman's duties are over, he has next either to go himself, or send one of his boys, to the Courier office, to dispose of any of the morning papers he has on hand. If there be a demand for any particular journal to supply the country customers of other Newsmen, and such journal is not to be

had at the office of publication, then the Newsman having that journal to dispose of will get full price for it. If the supply considerably exceeds the demand, in consequence of several Newsmen having taken more copies in the morning than they could dispose of, then there is a proportionate reduction in the price. Opposite the door of the Courier office, has been for more than a quarter of a century the only locality recognised by Newsmen for disposing among each other of their over supplies of morning papers. What led to its being first fixed on for that purpose, I cannot say; very probably it may have been its central situation. This particular traffic in the morning journals usually begins at four o'clock, and is in most cases over by five. In the majority of cases the Newsmen, instead of going themselves, send their boys to transact this part of their business; and right noisy little fellows they are. Some time ago they were so uproarious and blocked up the passage on the pavement so completely, that it was deemed requisite to station a policeman at the place to maintain

something like order. It is often amusing to hear them proclaiming aloud the various newspapers they have for sale. "Who's got a *'Eral* or a *Chron.?*" "Who's for a *'Tiser* or *Toimes?*" shouts one little fellow in the same breath. "I've got a *'Eral,*" answers one. "Here's a *Chron.,*" answers another. A third sings out, "I'll take a *'Tiser,*" and a fourth bawls, at the full stretch of his voice, "I vants a *Toimes,*" elbowing his way through the crowd towards the party having the paper to dispose of. But to form anything like a correct idea of the scene which is every afternoon exhibited at the Courier office, you must fancy that you hear scores of voices all shouting out something of the kind I have mentioned, at once, and where you see scores of boys pushing one another backwards and forwards, and playing all description of tricks.

Here let me remark, by way of parenthesis, that since this was written, a great part of the business done in this way has been removed to the bottom of Catherine Street; which, as my town readers are aware, is only about

twelve or fifteen yards from the Courier-office. I have not heard the cause of this removal.

Between four and five comes the publication of the evening papers, which now occupies the attention of the Newsmen. In this case, however, their pedestrian capabilities are not called into exercise to the same extent as in the case of the morning papers, the far greater portion of the evening journals being simply put into the post-office, to be forwarded to subscribers in the country. The delivery of the evening papers is usually over before six o'clock; but then, for at least six months in the year, that is to say, during the time that Parliament is sitting, they have to watch the publications of second editions of the evening papers, as many of their country customers give positive instructions to have the second editions regularly sent to them.

Some idea may be formed from what I have stated of the laboriousness of a Newsman's life. If there be an industrious hard-working member of the community, he is the man. I am assured that there are some Newsmen who, in the

prosecution of their pursuits as distributors of the public journals, walk or run upwards of twenty miles every day. And this, be it recollected, in all weathers, whether in the "summer's heat" or the "winter's cold."

And what aggravates the hardship of the Newsman's condition is, that the Sabbath, which to most other classes of the community affords a cessation from labour, "shines no day of rest to him." A considerable part of that day is spent in the delivery of the Sunday papers.

And yet, notwithstanding the laborious duties which devolve on the Newsman, and the fact that he scarcely ever enjoys one hour's intermission from one year's end to another; notwithstanding this, his remuneration is so small, after paying the necessary expenses incurred in carrying on his business, and allowing for bad debts and unsold papers, that, except in very rare cases indeed, he has no prospect, by any practicable economy, of ever being able to "lay by" anything against the time of sickness or the infirmities of advanced years: and he thinks it a great matter if he can by his utmost industry

and exertions, earn as much as will procure him his daily bread.

I know of no body of men who contribute more largely to the comfort of the metropolitan community than the Newsmen. Without them the daily papers could not be expeditiously or effectually circulated throughout so vast a place as London. I cannot conceive of any machinery, were the task of distributing their papers left to the proprietors of the papers themselves, by which that task could be satisfactorily executed. Whenever any country order for a newspaper is addressed to the proprietors of the paper ordered, which is often done through ignorance of the fact that all the London journals are circulated through the intervention of Newsmen, the order is handed over to some particular Newsman, and, for the penny profit on each copy of the paper, he runs the risk of the bad debt, should there be no order for payment on any house in London.

There are, as before-mentioned, three or four wholesale news-agents in London. They supply the Newsmen whose business is not so large

as to justify them in ordering quires at a time of particular journals. They supply them on the same terms as if they had gone for any quantity under a quire, to the office of the paper, their own profit consisting in the odd paper given them gratis by the publishers after every quire they order. Those Newsmen in the habit of using a quire of any particular journal make a point of going direct to the office of publication, because they are also entitled to the odd paper after every quire. Some of the wholesale newspaper agents pass an incredible number of newspapers through their hands in one day. I have heard the number which passes through the hand of one house estimated at seven thousand per day. These wholesale Newsmen have very extensive country connexions, and send off newspapers by the morning coaches in thousands to all parts of the country.

Most of the Newsmen keep small shops for carrying on their business, and most of them deal, in addition to the newspapers, in cheap periodicals and other publications.

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